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Travels in Chaldæa

Robert Mignan



ANTIQUE GEM FOUND AT BABYLON.

In the Authors Possession.

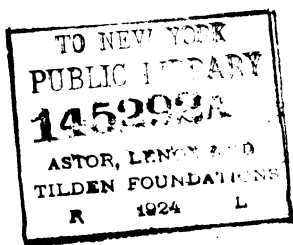
TRAVELS
IN
C H A L D Æ A,
INCLUDING
A JOURNEY FROM BUSSORAH TO BAGDAD,
HILLAH, AND BABYLON,
PERFORMED ON FOOT IN 1827.
WITH
OBSERVATIONS ON THE SITES AND REMAINS OF
BABEL, SELEUCIA, AND CTESIPHON.

BY CAPT. ROBERT MIGNAN,
OF THE HON. EAST INDIA COMPANY'S SERVICE ;
Lately in command of the Escort attached to the Political Resident in Turkish
Arabia, and Member of the Royal Asiatic Society of
Great Britain and Ireland.

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1829.

II



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TO
HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF SOMERSET,
THE FOLLOWING WORK
IS, BY PERMISSION,
INSCRIBED,
WITH PROFOUND RESPECT, AND
SINCERE GRATITUDE,
BY
THE AUTHOR.

LONDON,
October, 1829.

P R E F A C E.

NOTWITHSTANDING much has already been written regarding the ruins of the once mighty Babylon, it must be acknowledged that all our information on this interesting subject, is far from sufficient to make the curious investigator thoroughly acquainted with even the mere remains of this formerly renowned capital.

Though I flatter myself that my narrative will add considerably to the knowledge which the public already possess, and though many abler investigators than myself may hereafter prosecute their researches on the same ground, still the tale of Babylon, even in her desolation,

will probably long remain untold, and the features that distinguished her days of prosperity never be perfectly traced.

Among those who have recently written of Chaldæa, Rich has confined himself to Babel; and to the information which he has furnished, Keppel has added some slight notices of remarkable vestiges on either bank of the Tigris; both, at the same time, conceding what was due to the critical observations and acute inferences of Major Rennell.

I have endeavoured to extend the researches of the two former, and to verify their conclusions; and I trust that my labours will throw additional light upon the descriptions of the ancients, as well as confirm the hypothesis adopted by Buckingham, whose observations on the ruins appear to me to be more critical, correct, and comprehensive, and more fully to accord with the earliest accounts, than those of any other modern traveller.

Of the ancients, Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus are the most valuable guides; then

Arrian and Strabo, and some of the earlier historians of the Roman Empire; next to these, much important information regarding Babel and Chaldæa may be obtained from the Talmud of the Jews, and from the Biblical writings of many learned Christians of those countries, which might be explained by the priests still versed in the Syriac and Chaldaic dialects. From the Chaldaic books of the Sabæans too, some interesting facts might be derived; as also from a close examination of the earlier Mohammedan historians, such as Tebari and Masudi; from the geography of Abulfeda, and of Yacuti; and from biographical writings such as Semaani's *Kitab ul Ansâb*. With these, and the aid of modern geography, many valuable details in illustration of the early state and history of Chaldæa might still be elicited.

To that eminent and accurate geographer, Major Rennell, I am greatly indebted. This gentleman has been pleased to express his approbation of my labours; and I feel pecu-

liar satisfaction in thus publicly acknowledging the many acts of kindness which I have experienced from him.

I am also under obligations for assistance and counsel to Major Taylor, the Honourable East India Company's Political Resident at Bussorah, whose attainments in Oriental literature are too well known to require mention. To him I am indebted for all the translations of Arabic inscriptions given in this Volume, and also for many of the valuable notes which I have annexed. I sincerely trust that he will one day present the world with an account of this most interesting land, as few have enjoyed better opportunities of doing justice to the subject.

A map of my route is prefixed, together with a plan of the ruins, to the distance of about eight miles on either side of the principal mounds. Drawings of some remarkable buildings, costumes, &c. are given, which it is hoped will not prove unacceptable.

Whatever merit may be attached to these illustrations, is, in strict justice, due to the correct and masterly pencil of Mr. Richard Craggs, who has produced them from my own rude sketches.

My aim, throughout this work, has been rather to delineate the various remarkable objects that presented themselves to my attention, than to enter deeply into useless theory and vain speculation;—in short, to furnish an accurate account of the existing remains of ancient grandeur, to describe their present desolation, and to trace something like a correct outline of the once renowned Metropolis of Chaldæa.

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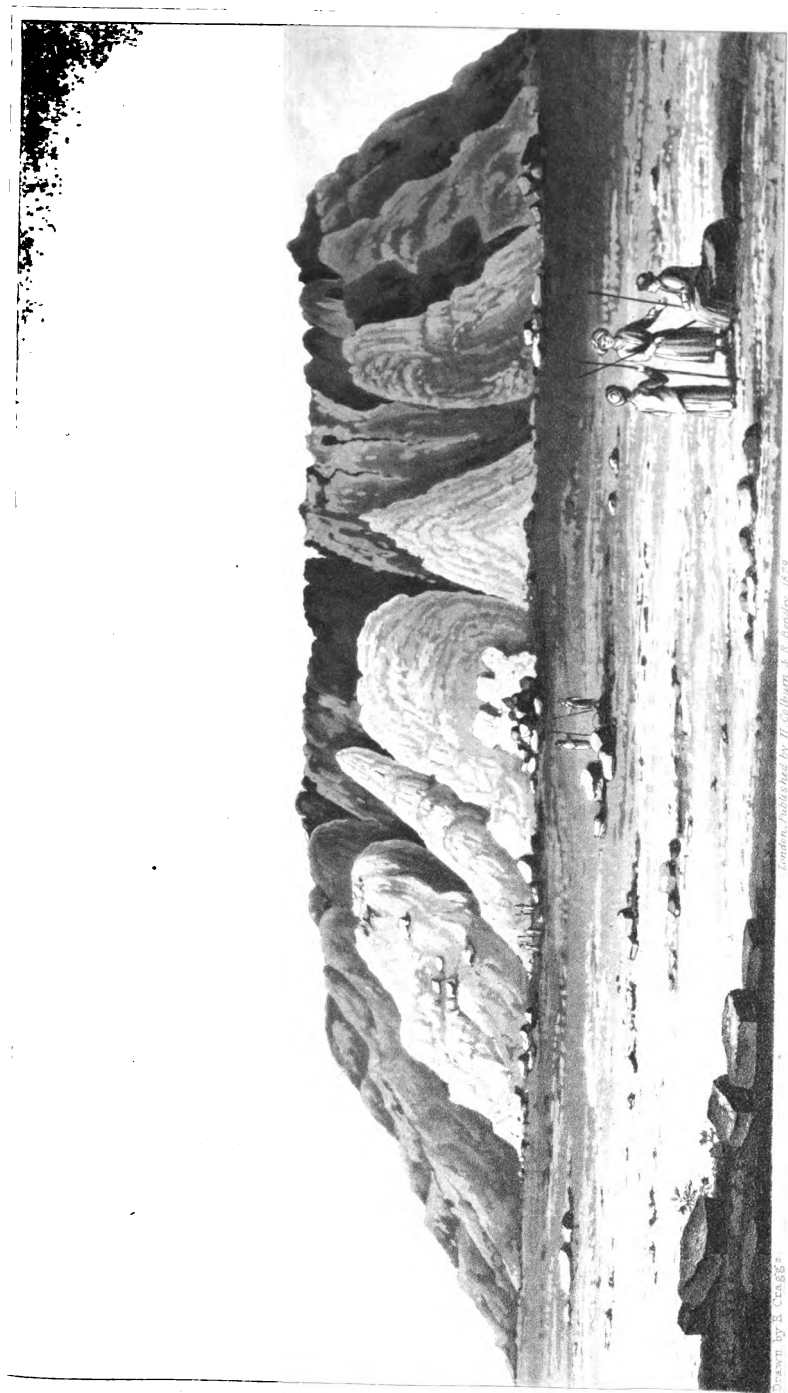
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London, published by H. Colburn & R. Barclay, 1879.

Drawn by A. Craig.

THE MUELLERBAH.



Engraved by H. Colburn & R. P. Smith, 1828

Drawn by R. Craggs.

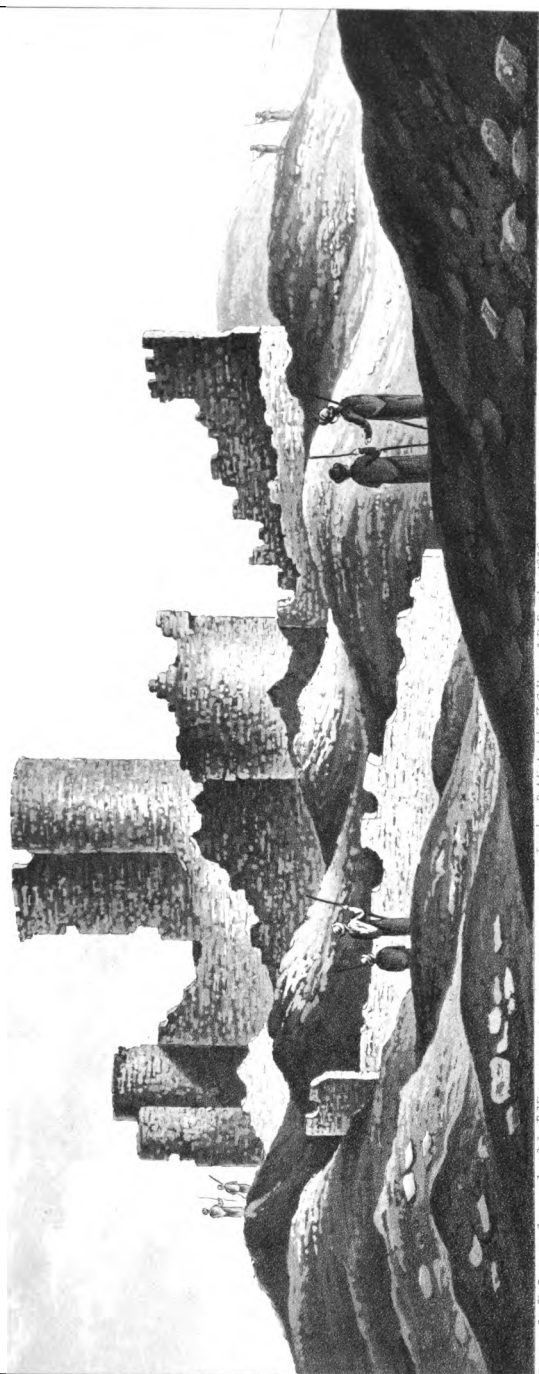
VIEW OF THE EMBANKMENT WITH URNS, AMRAN HILL, AND TOMB.



London, Published by H. Colburn, & R. Bentley, 1829.

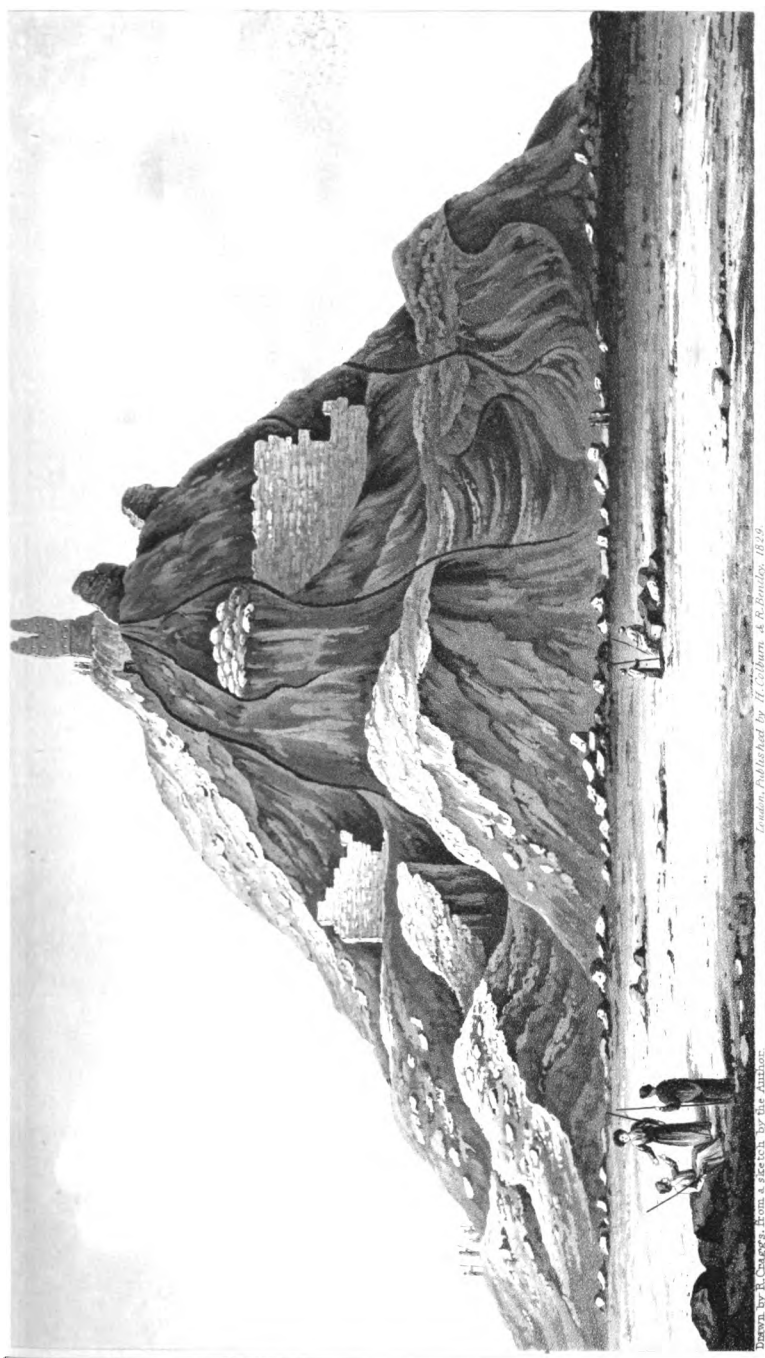
Drawn on the spot, by J. A. Kneller, 1829.

BASSORAH FROM THE EUPHRATES.



Drawn by H. Craggs from a sketch by F. McGowan. London, Published by H. Colburn & R. Bentley, 1852.

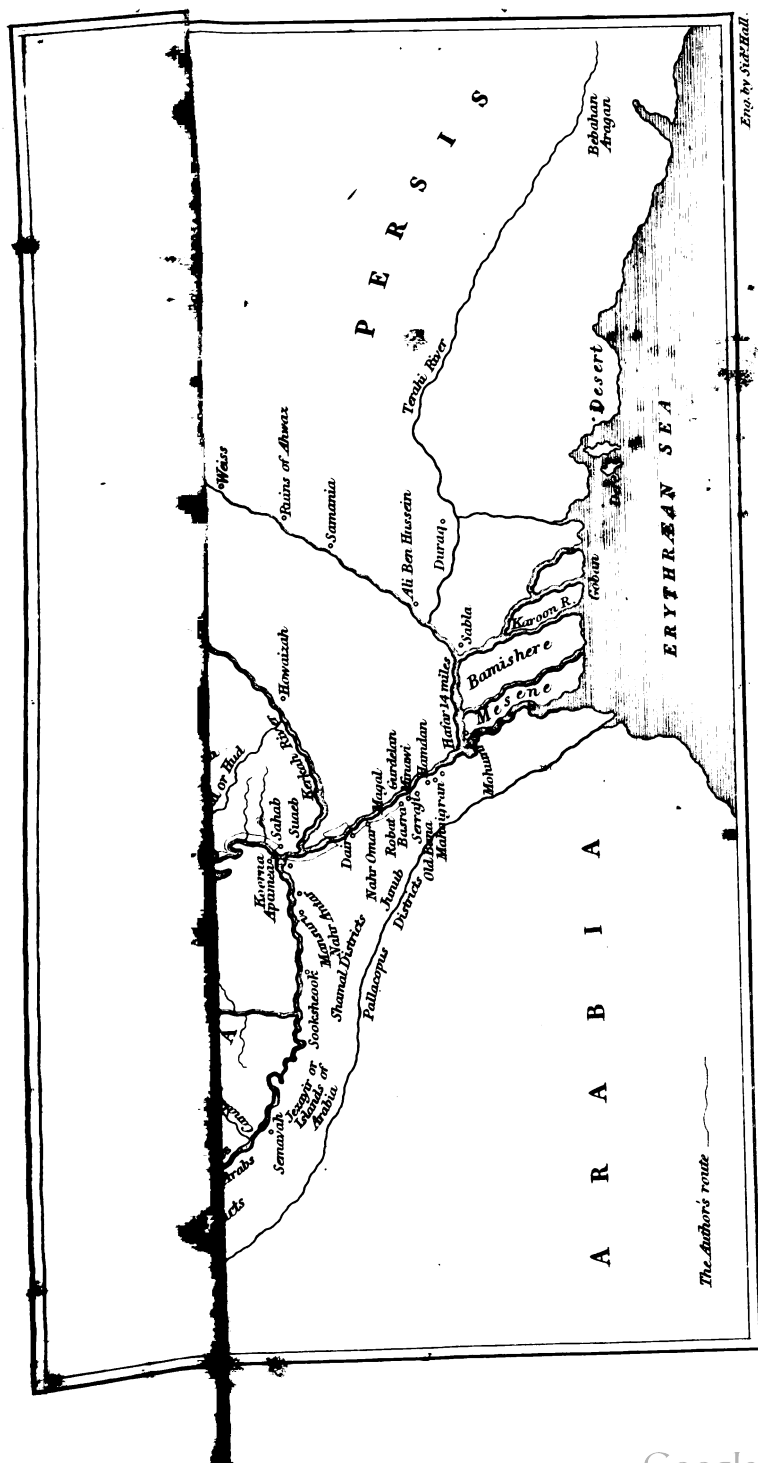
THE KASR, OR PALACE.



Engraving, Published by H. Colburn, & R. Bentley, 1829.

Drawn by R. Chubb, from a sketch by the Author.

BERS NEMIROOD FROM THE N. N. W.



Engr. by Sit. Hall.

London, Published by Colburn & Bentley, New Burlington Street, Oct. 1829.

The Author's route

TRAVELS
IN
BABYLONIA, CHALDÆA,
&c. &c.

CHAPTER I.

The Author determines to visit Babylonia.—Departure from Bussorah.—Hamlet of Nohar Omer.—Situation of Suaeb.—Supposed site of the Garden of Eden.—Village of Zet-chiah.—Controversy with Arabs.—Tomb of Ozair.—Jewish Pilgrimage.—Character of the Arabs.—Camp of the Beni Lam.—Appearance of the tribe.—Their occupation, &c.—The River Al` Hud, or Hid.—Curious culinary operations.—Filthy state of the Arabs, dress, &c.—The Hamrine Mountains.—The Tigris.—Inland navigation.—Monotonous aspect of the country.—Mountains of Lauristan.—Course of the Tigris.—Trade between Bussorah and Bagdad.—Arab encampment.

HAVING determined on a journey into the heart of Babylonia, to visit the remains of ancient cities hitherto but little explored and less perfectly described, and fearing lest some

revolution in the Turkish government might suddenly render the country totally impassable, as is not unfrequently the case, I quitted Bussorah, on the 22nd of October, 1827, and proceeded along the banks of the Shut-ul-Arab, or the river of the Arabs, in a northerly direction, purposing to note minutely every thing worthy the investigation of the antiquary, or interesting to the general observer.

I was accompanied by six Arabs, completely armed and equipped after the fashion of the country, having taken with me a small boat, tracked by eight sturdy natives, in order to facilitate my researches on either bank of the stream. A compact canteen, a few changes of linen, two blankets, and a carpet about the size of a hearth-rug, formed an ample and comfortable travelling apparatus.

At sunset we reached a small hamlet, called Nohar Omer, on the western bank, where we found Ajeel, at the head of the powerful tribe of Montefik Arabs, occupying an extensive

encampment of reed huts and tents, some composed of goats' hair, and some of cotton cloth. A little beyond this, at the village of Dair, stands a minaret, which, according to many Mohammedan writers, has some claims to antiquity: I am informed that the natives all concur in attributing its existence to the Genii, which circumstance renders it an object of much veneration among them. Barren women suppose that a visit to the sacred spot will render them prolific; which, no doubt, tends to increase the number of its votaries.*

At eight o'clock the next morning we crossed the mouth of the Kerkha, or Howizah river, at Suaeb;† a station so called from a small collection of huts, situated about a mile up the stream, which is here fifty yards broad, and extremely tortuous. One hour more brought

* See Appendix, note A.

† It is absolutely necessary here to remark, that Kinneir has made the mouth of this river twenty miles below Koorna, whereas it is barely three.—Vide Kinneir's "Geographical Memoir of the Persian Empire," p. 92.

us to Koorna, the Apamea of the ancients, from Apama, the wife of Seleucus Nicator, in whose honour he founded the town.* It stands on the most southern extremity of Mesopotamia, at the conflux of two of the finest rivers in the East, the Euphrates and Tigris; and though now an insignificant place, the existing extensive ruins attest its former importance.†

Continuing along the banks of the Tigris, in a direction north, ten degrees west, (the

* Seleucus Nicator founded thirty-five cities in greater and lesser Asia; sixteen of which he named Antioch, from Antiochus, his father; nine Seleucia, from his own name; six Laodicea, from Laodice, his mother; three Apamea, from Apama, his first wife, (of which this city was the chief; and one Stratonicea, from Stratonice, his last wife. According to Dean Prideaux, he was a great protector of the Jews, and the first that gave them settlements in those provinces of Asia, which lie on this side of the river Euphrates. As they had been faithful and serviceable to him in his wars, and in many other respects, he granted them great privileges in all the cities which he built. — Vide Prideaux's "Connection of the Old and New Testament."

† See Appendix, B.

Euphrates branching off due W.S.W. by compass,) we almost immediately had on either bank the untrodden Desert.* This is conjectured to have been the site of the Garden of Eden; consequently there appeared, as the prophet Joel says, chap. ii. ver. 3, "The land of Eden before us, and behind us a desolate wilderness." The absence, alas! of all cultivation, the noisy rippling of the rapid stream, the sterile, arid, and wild character of the whole scene, formed a contrast to the rich and delightful accounts delineated in Scripture.†

In the afternoon we reached Zetchiah. My Arab guards were afraid to proceed without the

* The natives, in travelling over these pathless deserts, are compelled to explore their way by the stars, in the same manner as Diodorus Siculus (lib. 1, p. 156, edit. Rhodoman,) expressly states that travellers in the southern part of Arabia directed their course *by the bears*, ἀπὸ τῶν Ἀρκτῶν.

† It should seem that Paradise lay on the confluent stream of the rivers Euphrates and Tigris, but principally on the eastern bank, which divided into two branches above the garden, and two more below it. From the description of these rivers by ancient historians and geographers, Major

permission of the chief, or head of the village. After waiting a few minutes, three wild-looking fellows came to us from the opposite bank, each armed with a brace of pistols, sabre, and a dagger in the girdle. I produced a letter from the Montefik Sheikh, to whom they *profess* allegiance; but, without noticing it, they said, if I did not instantly pay the customary tax, they would prevent my proceeding on my journey.

After allowing the guards to tire themselves with wrangling, without any effect, I paid the *goomruck*, or tribute. They then asked if I had any dates, coffee, tobacco, and powder, adding,

Rennell infers, that in ancient times they preserved distinct courses to the sea, until the reign of Alexander; although at no great distance of time afterwards they became united, and joined the sea in a collective stream. The Cyrus and Araxes also kept distinct courses in ancient times. This, however, does not invalidate a primæval junction of these rivers, before the Deluge, which certainly produced a prodigious alteration in the face of the primitive globe. Besides, the changes in the beds of other great rivers, such as the Nile, the Ganges, and Barampooter, even in modern times are known to be very great.—Dr. Hales's "New Analysis of Chronology."

at the same time, that, as I was an Englishman, I could procure as much of those articles as I desired for nothing. Perceiving now that they wished to detain me, I frankly told them, that if they would allow me to pursue my journey, I would give them some dates and coffee; but on the contrary, if I returned, they would not only lose these things, but incur the displeasure, perhaps the punishment, of the Montefik Sheikh. This had the desired effect; they immediately accepted some coffee, made the usual salutation,* and returned to their homes.†

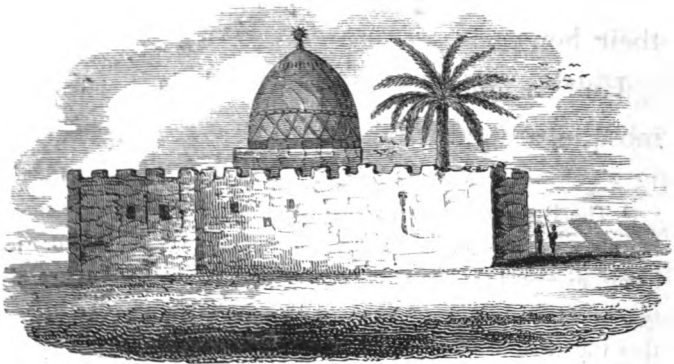
Half a mile beyond Zetchiah is a ruined mosque, around which are a few solitary date-

* The Bedoweens retain a great many of the customs and manners we read of in sacred as well as profane history; being, except in their religion, the same people they were two or three thousand years ago. Upon meeting one another they still use the primitive salutation, "Peace be unto you;" though they have made it a religious compliment, as if they said, "*Be in a state of salvation.*"—Shaw's "*Travels in Barbary.*"

† The Sheikh of this village pays 50,000 piastres, (eyne) or 4500*l.* yearly to the Montefiks. This sum is collected

trees; and nearly opposite is a canal, which is navigable as far as the city of Howizah; it runs E. N. E. and contains a large body of water.

On the following day, shortly after sunrise, we arrived at a tomb, which is called by the Arabs Ozair: I could collect nothing concerning its history from my rude attendants. A good burnt-brick wall surrounds it, on passing which I found a spacious domed cloister inclosing a square sepulchre, containing



Tomb of Ozair, a Jewish Saint.

from the Bagdad trading boats and the cultivation of an extensive tract on either side of the Tigris. They also plunder all those who are so unfortunate as to fall into their power.

the ashes of Ezra, a Jewish saint. The interior is paved with the same sky-blue tile as adorns the dome, which affords a very brilliant appearance, particularly when the sun shines upon it. Over the doorway, are two tablets of black marble, filled up with Hebrew writing. The appellative Ozair has, I suspect, been assigned to it by the Jews, who erroneously suppose the spot to contain the bones of the prophet Ezra. Hither they perform a yearly pilgrimage from Bussorah, when the natives of the country waylay, rob, and strip them, and in this state the pilgrims invariably return to their homes. Were any resistance offered, three or four Arabs would think no more of depriving a dozen Jews of their lives, than of eating so many *onions*. * In fact, the Arab is here absolute master—no law (human or divine) restrains him; if he has not what he wants, he takes it, whenever and wherever he can find

* It is a vulgar and common saying in the country, that when you are in the company of Arabs, much less at their mercy, your life is not worth an *onion*.

it; if refused, he uses force; if resisted, the opponent is murdered: thus lives the independent, restless freebooter of the Desert.*

This day, October 25th, a prickly shrub, called in the country the *Camel's thorn*,† was so thick, I could scarcely continue my route along the banks of the river. In the short space of eighteen hours we travelled successively towards every point of the compass, proving how

* Ishmael lived by prey and rapine in the wilderness; and his posterity have all along infested Arabia and the neighbouring countries with their robberies and incursions. They live in a state of continual war with the rest of the world, and are both robbers by land, and pirates by sea. As they have been such enemies to mankind, it is no wonder that mankind have been enemies to them again; that several attempts have been made to extirpate them; and even now, as well as formerly, travellers are forced to go with arms, and in caravans or large companies, and to march and keep watch and guard like a little army, to defend themselves from the assaults of these freebooters.—Bishop Newton's "Dissertation on the Prophecies."

† See Appendix, C.—Camels browse upon it in preference to any other herb. The mastication of it produces a frothy salivation at the mouth, which appears to give great pleasure to the animal.—Vide Morier's "Travels," vol. ii. chap. vii. page 115.

tedious and prolonged is an advance into Babylonia, when following the course of this serpentine stream. Still continuing along the banks, I met with buffaloes plunging into the water, and saw large flocks of the pelican * spreading their silvery wings, and perching on the backs of these animals, which easily accommodated themselves to the incumbrance.

At three, p. m. we saw an encampment of Arabs crossing the river on inflated sheep-skins. An hour after, I passed through the camp of the Beni Lam Arabs, extending eight miles along the eastern bank: from them I met with no disrespect; curiosity was their predominant feeling, to gratify which they impeded my progress by pressing forward with unhesitating freedom. The men and women appeared extremely poor, and with their children, horses, mules, dogs, and asses, huddled together beneath their long goat-hair tents, formed a motley group of objects, of the true *Syntactical*

* The *Pelecanus fuscus* of Linnæus.

Picturesque, not often seen in such striking associations: the whole would have been a capital scene for the potent pencil of a Wilkie, or the graver of a Cruikshank. The tents of these “wanderers of the Desert” formed no regular street, but were spread over the plain in the greatest disorder.* Having passed through this (to all appearance) *friendly* tribe, and looking back, the Desert, as far as the eye could reach, was covered with flocks of sheep, belonging to this great and powerful tribe. No tents whatever occupied the western bank of the river. A large troop of horsemen were exercising on a part of the plain, that made an excellent parade-ground, which displayed to advantage the regularity of their movements.

Hanway, in his account of Persia, when speaking of the Arabs, says: “Their expert-

* They had possessions of flocks and possessions of herds, Genesis xxvi. v. 14. The habits of each assimilated with those of Jacob, a plain man dwelling in tents.—Id. xxv. v. 27.

ness in the use of the lance and sabre, renders them fierce and intrepid. Their skill in horsemanship, and their capacity of bearing the heat of their burning plains, give them also a superiority over their enemies. Hence every petty chief in his own district considers himself as a sovereign prince, and as such exacts customs from all passengers. When they plunder caravans travelling through their territories, they consider it as reprisals on the Turks and Persians, who often make inroads into their country, and carry away their corn and their flocks. They generally marry within themselves."

The only occupation of this tribe is to stop the Bagdad boats, to drain the purses of their owners, and to oppress the poor villages around them with taxes. Benevolence is as foreign to them as gratitude ; their hearts are as impenetrable as their distant mountains. All around seems convulsed and fallen ; nature appears to languish, and to inform the traveller how wretched is the state of the people. The river meanders most capriciously, our bearings for the last two

hours having been N. $\frac{1}{2}$ E.; N. E.; E.; E. S. E.; S.; S. W.; W.; N. W.; and N. At nine, p. m. I forded a river, called Al Hud, or Hid;* the Beni Lam inhabit its banks; it appeared to contain a considerable body of water, capable of admitting the largest boats, particularly when full; at this time, however, the water had fallen fifteen feet. The natives of the country assert that boats may even reach Howizah by it; and the direction it takes, appears to justify their assertion. They call the Tigris *Hud*, hence to Koorna.

Having bought a couple of sheep for my people, I was witness to some curious culinary operations. The entrails were ripped open; pieces of which, with the hoofs, dipped once or twice into the water, were eaten by them *raw*; the rest of the animal, unflayed and unshorn, was put into a vessel and half boiled, when they drank the *soup*, and voraciously devoured the scarcely-warmed carcase. They are a very filthy set of people, particularly

* See Appendix, D.

in their food: had their Prophet enjoined impurity, instead of cleanliness, his commandment could not have been more vigilantly regarded to the letter, for their nature is brutal and obscene; their morals are in a more vitiated and depraved state than Europeans can possibly imagine.*

Shortly after daybreak we came up with a

* The fine, honourable, hospitable character generally attributed to the Desert Arabs is at present a fiction; it once may have been their just right; but alas! is now "Hyperion to a Satyr." For this change many reasons might be given; one will suffice—the great intercourse they are at present constantly enjoying with towns and cities. Dr. Shaw, in his *Travels in Barbary*, says: "The Arabs are naturally thievish and treacherous; and it sometimes happens that those very persons are overtaken and pillaged in the morning, who were entertained the night before with all the instances of friendship and hospitality. Neither are they to be accused for plundering strangers only, and attacking almost every person whom they find unarmed and defenceless, but for those many implacable and hereditary animosities which continually subsist among them; literally fulfilling to this day the prophecy of Hagar, that "Ishmael should be a wild man; his hand should be against every man, and every man's hand against him." The Doctor was himself plundered by a party of Arabs, in his journey from Ramah to Jerusalem, although he was escorted by a strong party of Turkish soldiers, and at the same time paid a large

small encampment of huts, constructed with mats, made of the date-leaf. Women covered with rags, men in old tattered cloaks, and children in a state of nudity, flying at my approach, were the objects that attracted my attention. One poor woman, bolder than her companions, ventured forward, and exclaimed to my guards, "Why, why! have you brought a wild man amongst us?" As far as the appearance of a beard, not lately trimmed, justified her inference, the woman's question was, perhaps, not ill-founded; I was wild as wandering palmer. On taking leave of these poor people, we threw dates among them, which, although it created a temporary confusion, gave them, ultimately, the usual delight of a successful scramble.* At noon,

sum to the Arabs, in order to secure a safe passage across their desert. This is a proof, not only of their independence and enjoyment of their liberty, but of their utter abuse of it.

* The Arabs are not so scrupulous as the Turks and Persians about their women; and though they have the harem, or women's part of the tent, yet such as they are acquainted with come into it.

we saw, for the first time, the Hamrine mountains; the view of them gave me renewed life and energy. Those only who have resided for years or even months in a flat country, can appreciate the nature of my sensations.

OCTOBER 27.—We reached Ali Ghurbee, on the north, and Ali Shurgee, on the south bank, points at which the Imâm Ali is said to have encamped, when on a pilgrimage to Persia. Near this the river has fallen thirty feet, by actual measurement: as the banks are not once in fifty miles half this height, it is evident that in the month of June, when the Tigris is at its fullest height, the whole country must be overflowed, and the innumerable canals branching off in every direction, (at present dry,) become perfectly navigable. It is impossible to reflect, without admiration, on the inland navigation of which this country is capable, or to consider without deep sorrow into what barbarous hands it has fallen. There is not the most distant prospect of improvement. If there

were any hope of a revolution bringing improvement, it would here be virtue to wish for one.

For the last three days, there had been such a provoking sameness in the appearance of the country, that had my weary limbs not convinced me I was moving onward, I could almost have supposed myself within the influence of the magnetised mountain of the Arabian Nights. The river still pursued a winding course, concealing itself behind continued headlands, covered with fresh brushwood. On the right side the mountains of Lauristan, of a bare and bluish appearance, form a marked contrast with the freshness of the river's channel. It is singular, that although these banks are proverbial for being the resort of lions and other wild animals, and travellers tell us of having seen them by day, and their repose at night having been disturbed by their roar, I have as yet been gratified neither by the pleasure of the first, nor agitated by the alarm of the second predicament.

It is hardly necessary to add, that the same waters subserve to the wants of Persia and Mesopotamia, waft the modern Baghalah of the merchant of Bagdad, and the old air-supported rafts and asphaltic coracles of Mosul, the ancient Nineveh.*

The commercial intercourse between Bus-sorah and Bagdad consists of Indian manufactures, brought chiefly from Calcutta and the Malabar coast, by ships of five hundred tons burthen; of which, about eight trade up the Persian Gulf annually, under the English flag, and several under Arab and Persian colours. The following passage, extracted from Rau-wolff's Travels, will prove the trade between these two places to have been very considerable in his day.

“In this town there is a great deposition of merchandizes, by reason of its commodious situation, which are brought hither by sea as well as by land from several parts,

* See Appendix, E.

chiefly from Natolia, Syria, Armenia, Constantinople, Aleppo, Damascus, &c. to carry them farther into the Indies, Persia, &c. So it happened, that during the time I was there, on the 2nd day of December, in 1574, there arrived twenty-five ships, with spice and other precious drugs, here, which came over sea from the Indies, by the way of Ormutz, to Balsora, a town belonging to the Grand Turk, situated on the frontiers, the farthest that he hath south-eastwards, within six days' journey from hence, where they load their goods into small vessels, and so bring them to Bagdat, which journey, as some say, taketh them up forty days. Seeing that the passage, both by water and land, belongeth both to the King of Arabia and the Sophi of Persia, which also have their towns and forts on their confines, which might easily be stopped up by them; yet, notwithstanding all this, they may keep good correspondence with one another; they keep pigeons, chiefly at Balsora, which, in case

of necessity, might be soon sent back again with letters to Bagdat. When loaden ships arrive at Bagdat, the merchants, chiefly those that bring spice to carry through the deserts into Turkey, have their peculiar places in the open fields without the town of Ctesiphon, where each of them fixeth his tents, to put his spices underneath, in sacks, to keep them there safe, until they have a mind to break up in whole caravans; so that at a distance one would rather believe that soldiers were lodged in them, than merchants; and rather look for arms than merchandizes; and I thought myself, before I came so near, that I could smell them."*

Towards the afternoon a southerly wind sprang up, and rather than my boat should lose the advantage of it, (the current being very strong against us,) I embarked for three hours; when I again pursued my tour on foot.

* Pp. 145, 146.

The wild brushwood, in which it was not very difficult to be lost, was inhabited by great numbers of the feathered tribe. I observed small birds of several different kinds, but saw none with rich plumage. The river here has fallen so considerably, that one-half of its bed is quite dry, composed of sand and clay banks.

At sunset I passed through an extensive camp of Arabs: they were as civil and as respectful as those I had hitherto met with, and appeared to be living in the most primitive state, chiefly employed in making a cloth from the wool of their sheep. They first spin it into yarn, winding the threads round small stones; these they hang on a stick, fixed in a horizontal position, between some shrubs or trees, to form a woof; then passing other threads alternately between these, they thus weave the cloth with which they clothe themselves. None of these encampments afforded a drop of milk, or a single egg. Towards night, parties of both sexes were crossing the stream in

a state of nudity, upon a stratum of rush, which is evidently of the same kind as the "vessels of bulrushes upon the waters," alluded to by Isaiah, in chap. xviii. ver. 2.

CHAPTER II.

Village of Koote.—Its situation.—The Camel and the Dromedary.—The Canal of Hye. — Singular amusement.— Ruins of a bridge.—Supposition respecting them.—General aspect of the Desert.—Approach to the cities of Seleucia and Ctesiphon.—No swans to be seen.—Extensive sandbanks.—Navigation of the Tigris.—Weapons of the Arabs.—The lion.—The Eelauts, a wandering tribe.—Their behaviour.—The Author's progress impeded.—Remarkable ruins.—Extensive wall.—Mumlihah.—Unsuccessful researches.

OCTOBER 29th.—This day brought me to Koote, a wretched village composed of a collection of cottages constructed with mud, and surrounded by a wall of the same material. It is situated on the eastern bank of the Tigris, and is erroneously reckoned half-way between Bussorah and Bagdad, since it is more by a journey of two days. Its position also is incorrectly laid down on the map of Colonel Macdonald Kinneir; for during the last eight-and-

forty hours, our course has varied from E. S. E. to S. S. W. and W. S. W., making almost nothing to the North. Large herds of camels were grazing in every direction, left without men or dogs: some allowed the stranger to approach, and betrayed no alarm; whilst others appeared much frightened, and were extremely wild. They were all of a white colour, and belonged to a powerful Arab chief, who resided in the neighbourhood.

Mr. Buckingham, whose extensive travels in the East were attended by circumstances which gave him every facility of correct observation, has, in his work on Mesopotamia, rendered a faithful description of this valuable inhabitant of the Desert. He remarks, that "the prevailing opinion in Europe is, that of the two kinds of this animal, the single-humped is the camel, and the double-humped the dromedary. The fact, however, is nearer the reverse. The double-humped camel is found only in Bactria, and the countries to the north and east of Persia; and these, being natives of a colder climate, and living in more fertile countries than the other

species, are shorter, thicker, more muscular, covered with a dark-brown shaggy hair, and heavier and stronger by far than any other camels. From this race of the double-humped animal, I am not aware of dromedaries being ever produced. The only camel seen in Arabia, Africa, Egypt, Syria, and Mesopotamia, is the single-humped. This, inhabiting a hot climate, and having always a scanty supply of food and water, is taller, more slender, of a paler colour, and altogether lighter in form and flesh, than the Bactrian camel. Its hair is as short, and its skin as sleek, as that of the horses or bullocks of England. It is from this race only that dromedaries are produced; these are merely single-humped camels of good blood and breed, which, instead of being used for burthen, are appropriated only to carrying riders and performing journeys of speed. They bear indeed the same relation to other single-humped camels, that race-horses do to other horses: care being taken, by preserving the purity of their descent, and improving their blood, to keep them always fit for and appropriated to

this particular purpose. They are trained, in **Egypt**, into dromedary corps for the supply of lancers and couriers, and perform wonderful journeys, both as to speed and distance. They are called, by the Arabs, *Hedjeen*; while the camel is called *Gemel*, or *Jemel*, according to the district in which the hard or soft pronunciation of the *g* prevails." *

Immediately opposite the village is a canal called the Hye, which runs into the Euphrates to the north of Soogishiookh : † its banks are a noted haunt for lions, and other ferocious animals. At this time its bed is perfectly dry, though it is navigable for eight months in the year. Hence to the mouth of the river Al Hud, the Arabs call this beautiful stream *Amarah*.

During the whole of the day it rained so hard, that my progress was not so great as I wished and expected; at night, however, the cold was piercing; and my followers, who were

* See Buckingham's Travels in Mesopotamia, vol. ii. p. 207.

† Literally the Sheikh's bazaar, or mart. This town is the head-quarters of the Montefik Arabs, who occupy both banks of the river, north and south, to a great distance.

in high spirits at having advanced so far, as well as from the pleasure they felt in breathing their native air, (many of whom were from the country near Bagdad,) collected themselves round a fire, formed a circle, and exhibited their native dance till midnight. For music, they were contented with a kettle covered with a round empty sheep-skin bag, which in general is used for holding oil, but on the present occasion served to form a drum. The harmony of the instrument was heightened by the clapping of hands, and a loud chorus of so peculiar a strain, that I am incapable of describing it, and such as I never heard before. One person at a time came forward and danced, keeping up a constant wriggling motion with his feet, hands, breast, and shoulders, until his gestures became too fatiguing to be continued.

The deportment of these people in towns bears a striking contrast to the insolent independence they assume in the Desert. They are a merry race, with a keen relish for drollery, endued with a power over their features, that is

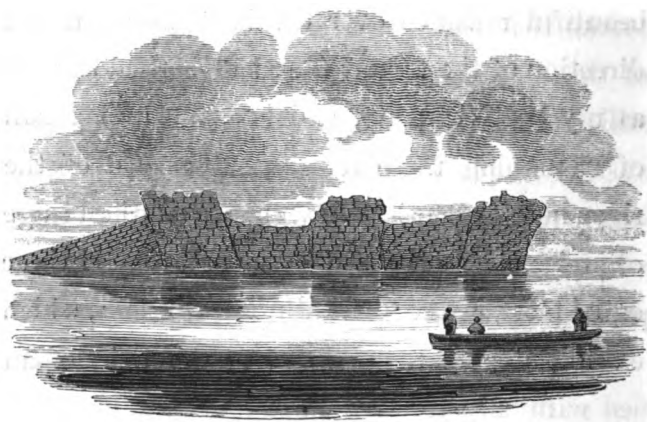
shown off in the richest exhibitions of grimace. I gave them a sheep, which they roasted whole, and devoured in a few minutes; they were shortly afterwards in a profound sleep.*

At sunrise on the following morning, after making a present to the Sheikh † of the village, I departed; and four hours' march over a barren plain brought me near the ruins of a bridge, which evidently has spanned the river; for, from the disturbed rippling of the water, I could distinctly observe where the fragments lay beneath. By this time the rain had ceased; the rising sun, gleaming upon the river, threw a beautiful radiance over the brushwood in the direction of the mountains: I embarked as soon as my boat came up, and had the satisfaction of examining these remains. The bed of the river here is considerably enlarged; the bridge occupies a central position, and consists of three equal piers, of the finest kiln-burnt bricks, which exhibit a great resemblance to the Babylonian

* See Appendix, F.

† Presents are considered in Eastern countries essential to kind and civil intercourse.

material in dimension and composition, and are as hard as stone. This is a singular circumstance, when we consider that they are, for the greater part of the year, beneath the surface of the stream. The extent of the ruins, at present above water, is sixty feet in length, and seventeen in breadth; and the height of the most perfect pier, eight. This was the first time I had met with any remains of antiquity: none of my people had ever seen these before, having always passed the spot when the river was at the full.



Remains of an ancient Bridge.

Colonel Macdonald Kinneir, on his journey from Constantinople to Bussorah, in the year 1813, mentions the circumstance of his boat being stranded on one of the piers of an ancient *stone* bridge, and that it was so old, no one could tell by whom, or in what age, it was erected.* As the position of this bridge agrees within a few miles to the one he alludes to, I apprehend it must be the same; but Kinneir is mistaken when he says it is of stone. My boatmen were at first afraid to approach it, as the "stones," they said, might materially injure their boat; it was only on extracting the bricks that they were convinced of its being of this material. The face of the country was still open and flat, presenting to the eye one vast level plain, where nothing is to be seen but here and there a herd of half-wild camels, whose flesh is thought by the Arabs to be superior to venison.

This immense tract is very rarely diversified with any trees of moderate growth; but

* Vide Kinneir's "Travels in Asia Minor, Armenia, and Kurdistan," page 501.

abounds in brushwood and short-lived herbage, occupied by numbers of partridges, hares, and gazelles, which reign supreme lords of an immeasurable wild, bounded only by the horizon. When the orb of day rises, he appears emerging from the earth, without rays, until considerably above the horizon; and on sinking into the golden chambers of the west, his beams disappear long before the body of the orb is covered.

The soil of this Desert consists of a hard clay mixed with sand, which, at noon, becomes so heated by the sun's rays, (although the nights are cold,*) that I find it too hot

* *Thus* I was; in the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night; and my sleep departed from my eyes.— (Genesis xxxi. 40.)

“ In Europe the days and nights resemble each other, with respect to the qualities of heat and cold: but it is quite otherwise in the East. In the lower Asia, in particular, the day is always hot: on the contrary, in the height of summer the nights are as cold as at Paris in the month of March. I have travelled in Arabia and in Mesopotamia, the theatre of the adventures of Jacob, both in winter and in summer, and have found the truth of what the Patriarch said, ‘ That he was scorched with heat in the day, and stiffened with cold in the night.’ This contrariety in the qualities of the air in twenty-four hours is extremely great in some places, and not

to walk over it with any degree of comfort. It is not, however, my intention to de-

conceivable by those that have not felt it: one would imagine he had passed in a moment from the violent heats of summer to the depth of winter. The heat of the sun is tempered by the coolness of the nights, without which the greatest part of the East would be barren and a desert: the earth could not produce any thing."—*Sir J. Chardin.*

The hot pestilential south wind, which blows from these deserts, commences from the 20th of June, and continues for about seven weeks. It is thus described by Mr. Bruce:—"This hot wind is called by the Arabs *Samum*, or *Simoom*. It is generally preceded by an extreme redness in the air, and usually blows from the south-east, or from the south, a little to the east. It appeared in the form of a haze, in colour like the purple part of a rainbow, but not so compressed, or thick: it was a kind of *blush upon the air*. The guide warned the company, upon its approach, to fall upon their faces, with their mouths close to the ground, and to hold their breath as long as they could, to avoid inhaling the outward air. It moved very rapidly, about twenty yards in breadth, and about twelve feet high from the ground; so that," says Bruce, "I had scarcely time to turn about and fall upon the earth, with my head to the northward, when I felt the heat of its current plainly upon my face. We all fell upon our faces until the Simoom passed on, with a gentle ruffling wind. When the meteor, or purple haze, had passed, it was succeeded by a light air, which still blew so hot as to threaten suffocation, which sometimes lasted three hours, and left the company totally enervated and exhausted, labouring under asthmatic sensations, weakness of stomach, and violent head-aches, from imbibing the poisonous vapour."—*Bruce's Travels.*

tain the reader by an enumeration of my sufferings from bodily fatigue; those who have crossed these desert wilds are already acquainted with their dreary tediousness, even on horseback; what it is on foot they can easily imagine. The thought, however, that I was gradually approaching the sites of the once magnificent and renowned cities of Seleucia and Ctesiphon, with the Tigris still flowing beneath the solitary remains of ancient splendour, amply compensated me for all my troubles, and animated me with renewed strength and vigour.

I perceived no swans upon the surface of the stream: hoping to meet with some of these birds, I had traced its current for miles, but was still disappointed. In vain, too, I looked for the smallest stones; there is not one in the district; nor are there any fragments of ruined edifices, to tell of "long forgotten ages."

At four, p. m. I saw a very extensive sand-bank, that stretched more than half over the bed of the river: it was studded throughout with innumerable small cupolas of

clay; and as the eye glanced quickly over the whole, it reminded one exactly of the domes which cover the bazaars at Ispahan, Shiraz, and other Persian cities.

The root, from which is procured what in England is called *liquorice*,* is so abundant throughout the country, that it is burnt as fire-wood.

Some modern travellers have remarked that this river is totally unnavigable in the dry season, which is incorrect. The Tigris, during the whole year, contains a sufficient body of water for moderate-sized boats, and these heavily laden. Several, requiring a great draught of water, quitted Bussorah a few days before me, and, although the river had been remarkably low all the season, their progress was not interrupted by a want of water. The great and only difficulty they had to contend with, was the savage inhabitants of these banks; not the lion, but a fiercer animal—the Desert

* The Glycyrrhiza, with both smooth and scabrous pericarps. The Arabs call it *soos*. The Glycyrrhiza echinata is the most abundant.

Arab, who never goes in search of his wild neighbour; but, should he chance to meet the king of the forest, he slays him in self-defence. The Arab's chief weapons being the sword and spear, he is not always certain of conquering his foe. For this reason all the people hereabouts are much alarmed by the circumstance of the lion making this part his favourite haunt.

At sunset we saw some fires at a short distance. On going to the spot, we found a camp of one of the wandering tribes, known by the name of Eelauts*,—as usual, poor—but happy, contented, and civil. A few sheep and goats appeared to be their only property. The left nostril of most of the women of this tribe was perforated, to admit a gold or silver ring, from which hung a pearl or turquoise.

How widely different is the behaviour of these poor people from that of the roving Arab,

* Wandering pastors of Persian or Coordish origin. Pockocke describes all their riches to consist in goats and sheep, and says that they live in great poverty, having nothing except a few dates and goats' milk.

who accosts the traveller in an overbearing, insolent tone, and haughty manner; who is only deterred from attacking and robbing the stranger through *fear*—the sole reason which compels him to restrain his lawless wishes whenever he may chance to meet an European!

Richards, in his Lectures on Prophecy, remarks, that “the region inhabited by the Arabs is situated in that portion of the globe in which society originated and the first kingdoms were formed. The greatest empires of the world arose and fell around them. They have not been secluded from correspondence with foreign nations, and are thus attached through ignorance and prejudice to simple and primitive manners. In the early periods of history they were united, as allies, to the most powerful monarchs of the East, under their victorious Prophet. They once carried their arms over the most considerable kingdoms of the earth; through many succeeding ages the caravans of the merchant, and the companies of Mahometan pilgrims, passed regularly over their deserts: even

their religion has undergone a total change. Yet all these circumstances, which, it might be supposed, would have subdued the most stubborn prejudices, and altered the most inveterate habits, have produced no effect upon the Arabs ; and they still preserve, unimpaired, a most exact resemblance to the first descendants of Ishmael."

OCTOBER 31st.—I was detained a great part of this day, from my boat having grounded. As my guards were required to assist in floating her off, they would not allow of my proceeding until they could rejoin me, the road being (in their opinion) unsafe for any person to travel unattended, much less an Englishman. I was reluctantly obliged to yield to their wishes, and seating myself on the margin of the stream, remained for some hours contemplating with delight the unruffled course of the waters gliding beneath me.

While reflecting on the various remains of antiquity connected with the history of this beautiful river, an Arab tapped me on the

shoulder, and said, if I accompanied him, he would show me the ruins of a wall at no great distance, and on the water's edge. I instantly followed him, and had the company of my guards likewise, who were determined not to lose sight of me.

Continuing in a northerly direction for two hours, we came to a round pillar, filled up with earth and broken tile, built of furnace-burnt bricks, placed together alternately in a horizontal and vertical position, situated within twelve feet of the water's edge. After digging ten feet perpendicularly, and clearing away the rubbish from within, I did not arrive at its foundation; the diameter was five feet and a half. It is very evident that the river has here considerably encroached, for its bed is covered with broken bricks and fragments of building. The bank is thirty-five feet in height; and from the pillar I distinctly traced a wall built into the bank (which extends due north) for three hundred and seventy-two feet, of the

same material as the pillar, but much smaller than such portions as I extracted from the bridge yesterday, and more nearly resembling those made use of at the present day in the cities of Bagdad and Bussorah. There are several hollows and mounds all over the plain, extending from the summit or margin of the bank in an easterly direction.

The whole surface of this tract was strewed with bricks and broken pottery, of various kinds and colours; but I could trace no remains of building, nor any thing embedded within the mounds, although I dug into all of them. From their soft state it appears that they have been robbed of all their valuable burnt material, which bids defiance to the hand of time. A few more years will, I fear, remove every vestige of this extensive wall, a great portion of which has been washed into the river, as is evident from the vast quantity of bricks lying beneath the water. This place is on the eastern bank, and is called by the

natives Mumlah; they can give the traveller no information whatever concerning it.

In Keppel's Narrative of a journey overland from India, viâ Bussorah and Bagdad, a place called Mumlihah is mentioned, and this spot coincides with it in every respect, with the exception of its being placed on the opposite side of the river, whither I went with his book in my hand, and made a diligent search to discover the ruins spoken of, but was unsuccessful*.

* The author of the Personal Narrative appears to have derived much of his information on this part of the country from the ignorant Arabs who were with him. These people never agree in regard to traditionary tales, and the names of places. It is only upon the authority of well-informed respectable men, who have resided all their lives in the country, that we can depend for any authentic details: and even their accounts border upon the marvellous. In the Personal Narrative is the following passage in speaking of this spot:—

“ We came upon some extensive ruins on the *left bank* of the river, which our guides called *Mumlikeh*; instead of showing fragments of pillars, or any marks by which we might conjecture the order of architecture, they exhibit an accumulation of mounds, which, on a dead flat, soon attract the

The square masses of brick (mentioned in the note) must have been washed away, if ever any existed; for no traces of such buildings remain. As it is some years since Keppel visited this spot, and the river is still advancing with great force and rapidity, I have little doubt that a few more yearly freshes will sweep away even the present remains, "and leave not a wreck behind."

The smell of wild animals was extremely offensive at this place; and, as a heavy shower of rain had fallen during the night, rendering the soil moist, we traced the footsteps of a lion to an extensive patch of brushwood, where, very probably, he was concealed. Not one of my guards would approach or attempt to disturb the bushes, pretending not to see the

eye of a traveller, and have, at first sight, the appearance of sandy hillocks. On a nearer inspection they prove to be square masses of brick, facing the cardinal points, and though sometimes much worn by the weather, are built with much regularity: the neighbourhood of these large mounds is strewn with fragments of tile, broken pottery, and manufactured vitreous substances."

thicket which was before them; nevertheless they are very near-sighted. I have seldom met with a man that can distinguish with accuracy an object at the distance of half a mile; and many of them cannot fix their eyes on any given spot without causing much annoyance to their organs of vision.

CHAPTER III.

Water-courses.—Remarkable mounds.—Blocks of black stone.—Fruitless excavation.—Earthen vase.—Party of horsemen.—Insulated pile, called Shejur.—Curious column.—Remains of a wall.—Earthen vases.—Ruins, called Hoomania.—Discovery of Athenian coins.—Fleet of boats.—Their singular construction.—The Kooffah, a wicker-basket.—Ruins of a Fort.—Armed horseman.—Appearance of the river.—View of Tauk Kesra.—History of the Arabs.

NOVEMBER 1st.—During the course of to-day I crossed no less than forty water-courses, all running in an easterly direction, dug for the purpose of facilitating the irrigation of the interior part of the country, and carrying off the exuberant waters.* I occasionally saw the ske-

* “ Towards Babylon and Seleucia, where the rivers Tigris and Euphrates swell over their banks and water the country, the same kind of husbandry is practised as in Egypt, but to

letons of cattle, probably destroyed by the wild beasts; on this account, the flocks of every encampment are always driven at sunset into a thorny inclosure within the tents. At three in the afternoon I crossed the stream, and proceeded four miles from the left bank, in a westerly direction, to some mounds, which I reached at four. They stretched for nearly a mile north and south, and were composed of soft clay, externally covered with broken pieces of pottery, fragments of tile, flint glass, and shells. The highest mound, which occupied a central position, I estimated at five and twenty feet, surrounded by minor ridges of hillock; which are invariably the proofs of ruined buildings. On the top of the largest, to my great surprise, I stumbled upon some blocks of black stone, measuring four or five feet square, and completely honeycombed from exposure. Hitherto I felt convinced that no stone was to be found in the

better effect and greater profit. The people here let in the water by sluices and flood-gates as they require it."—*Plin. Nat. Hist.* book 18, c. 18.

country ; and the prevailing opinion of all those who have examined the remains of antiquity in these parts, has been, that burnt and unburnt bricks were the chief, I may add, only materials used for building in past times, as well as at the present day.

Concluding, then, that these stones must have been extracted from beneath the tumulus, I commenced clearing away at the base ; and as far as I dug, I found that the mound rested on layers of stone, each measuring about five feet square, so firmly joined together, that my digging implements broke to pieces, and obliged me to discontinue any farther attempt at excavation. There was no appearance of erect building whatever, nor any burnt or unburnt bricks, except on the summit, where I saw some fragments of brickwork perfectly black, petrified, and molten. I found a large portion of an earthen vase, (similar to some I have dug up near a village called Reschire, five miles to the south of Bushire in the Persian Gulph,) and human bones lying by it. This vessel was

made of baked clay, and appeared painted over: we had to delve with our hands for two feet deep, previous to extracting it. That there were several more I am convinced, as they are never found singly, but in long rows nearly touching each other, and fronting east and west. By this time the sun had gone down, and having to walk the same distance back to regain the bank of the river, we reluctantly left the spot.

Returning, I saw a great number of gazelles and several hares started from the brushwood. On reaching the river and looking towards the place we had recently quitted, I descried a party of horsemen crossing the plain, and felt extremely happy at having escaped their notice; otherwise we might have been subjected to considerable annoyance by the meeting.* I

* "The manner in which the Arabs make war and pillage the caravans, is by keeping at the side of them, or following them in the rear, at a greater or smaller distance, according to their forces, which may be easily done in Arabia, on account of its being one great plain; and in the night they fall silently upon the camp, and carry off one part before the rest are under arms."—*Sir John Chardin*.

should not omit to mention here, that the above noticed mounds are among the few for which the Arabs have no name ; nor is any ridiculous tale attached to the spot.

NOVEMBER 2nd.—As the sun rose above the distant mountains, I pursued my route in a westerly direction along the right bank, with four of my escort armed with swords and matchlocks. Towards noon we arrived at a solitary insulated pile, to which my Arabs gave the appellation of Shejur: it was a heap of argillaceous earth extending one hundred yards north and south, its elevation varying from ten to fifteen feet; it was bounded on all sides by the same barren desert, without a tree or any sign of cultivation. The surface of this mound was strewn with tile, kiln-burnt brick, a few small stones, glass, and several blocks of grey marble, thickly coated on one side with bitumen, as hard as the stone to which it was attached, and requiring our united strength to break off the smallest portion, so tenaciously did it adhere to the marble. This heap ap-

peared to have lost all its perfect bricks, being particularly soft and unpleasant to walk over. After digging round its base for two hours, without perceiving any remains of building, we crossed over to the left bank, and proceeded on a bearing of west for five-and-twenty minutes, when we reached a column situated on a gentle declivity, constructed of the finest kiln-burnt material, fastened together horizontally and perpendicularly by thin layers of cement, joining the whole together with great delicacy. The hand of Time had corroded it to such a degree, that the periphery of its base, which is only sixteen feet, supports the upper portion, the circumference of which is sixty-two feet, and its height is twenty; its vertex was terribly shattered, and irregularly torn by the elements.

Hence extensive ridges of mounds, varying in height and extent, are seen branching in every direction. At a hundred yards to the right of the column, I dug into a heap of ruins, (evidently the largest on the plain,) and

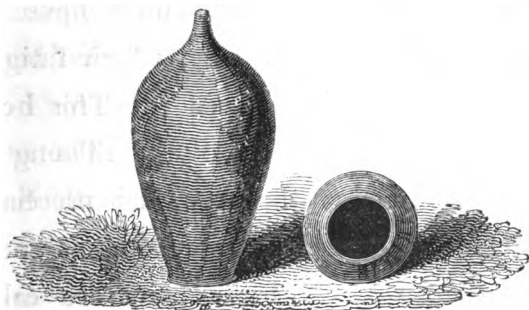
discovered the remains of a wall, (the bricks of which measured a square of nine inches,) likewise steps and the subverted portion of another column, corresponding, in dimensions and the materials of its composition, with the standing one already mentioned. This pile was extremely solid, and would have taken a considerable number of men to lay it open, by clearing away the accumulated earth and rubbish.

On a mound at some distance to the north-east, I observed the bases of walls that have been razed to the ground. The bricks of which they were composed must have been removed, or thrown down and buried beneath the shapeless and dilapidated ruin ; for I could not discover any traces of them. The surface of all the hillocks was covered with broken bricks, varnished tile, pottery, shells, and vitrified stones and glass. I computed their circumference at eight miles, as I was two hours and a half walking round them.

Three hours after the sun went down, by

the light of the lovely moon and starry sky, I was hurried from this interesting spot; my Arabs would remain no longer in the desert, wondering what there possibly could be in a heap of confused rubbish to engross so much of my time and attention.

Proceeding W. N. W. we almost immediately reached the river's bank, where some elevated hillocks attracted my curiosity, exhibiting fragments of brickwork and pottery. The river appears to have encroached; I met with several earthenware vases,* containing human



Ancient vase found near Hormania.

* See Appendix, G.

bones, which *had* undergone the action of fire. These urns measured three feet in length, by one and a half in depth and width, though some appeared to be of greater dimensions. They were terminated at one extremity by a cover without bottom, and at the other by a pointed handle. I could only find the smallest possible fragments of bone with the ashes, and these became dust on being touched; even simple exposure to the atmosphere produced nearly a similar effect.

The Tigris is here nearly as broad as the Shut-ul-Arab at Basrah; two thirds of its bed being completely dry, and composed of a mixture of sand and clay, which fatigued us greatly by walking over it. This heavy soil was nearly the means of my missing the boat altogether; as the crew had proceeded, regardless of my orders to remain at anchor until my return. These remains are called, by the natives of the country, Hoomania. At this place, on the 5th of March, 1812,

on the bank of the stream, the crew of a boat, who were cutting wood for sale at Bagdad, discovered pieces of silver, edging out of the margin of the bank, which was thus exposed, from its having been washed down by the action of the current.

On dividing their newly-acquired treasure, they quarrelled among themselves ; when one of the party hastened to Bagdad, and informed the Pasha's officers of the circumstance, who instantly despatched people to the spot, and on examination found, and brought away, between six and seven hundred ingots of silver, each measuring from one to one and a-half feet in length ; and an earthen jar, containing upwards of two thousand Athenian coins, all of silver. Many were purchased at the time by the late Mr. Rich, formerly the East India Company's Resident at Bagdad, and are now in his valuable collection, since bought by Government, and deposited in the British Museum. No coins were found of gold, or copper ; and the

whole were lodged in the treasury of Abdalla Pasha.

NOVEMBER 3.—I cannot say whether we missed any antiquities on our road this day or not, as our path lay through an almost impenetrable forest of brushwood, which extended into the Desert as far as the eye could reach. We passed a fleet of boats laden with wood, for use at Bagdad. They load half-mast high, so that if a fresh breeze were blowing, they would be obliged to lay-to until it subsided.

These vessels are of a most singular construction, being put together with reeds and willow, thickly coated with bitumen : the prow is the broadest part of the boat, being extremely bluff, and the whole as clumsy and unwieldy as possible.



Bagdad Wood-boats.

A round wicker-basket, called in Arabic *Kooffah*, is towed astern of each boat for the purpose of communicating with the shore; these are also covered with naptha, and are in use on the Euphrates, and likewise on the Diala. Their shape and construction belong to the most remote ages, being mentioned by Herodotus ;* and it is worthy of remark, that they have un-

* See the description of these round wicker-baskets, in the account given by Herodotus of Babylon.

dergone little or no change since he visited this country ; though, by the by, they at present exhibit no external covering of skin, as it would appear they did from the account of that famous historian. The following engraving exhibits the peculiar structure of the interior floor and upper margin of the Kooffah, as seen from above.



The interior floor, and upper margin of the Kooffah.

NOVEMBER 4.—At ten this morning I visited the ruins of a fort on the left bank of the river.

My Arabs said it was extremely ancient, but its appearance ill accorded with their opinion. Hence an unbroken range of mounds are discernible on the horizon, in a south-westerly direction. They appeared at a considerable distance, and were perhaps some of the dark heaps of fallen Babylon.

Every man we meet in the Desert is looked upon as an enemy. At noon we discovered an armed horseman pacing across the plain. The moment my escort saw him, they were off like lightning to demand his business, whence he came, and whither he was going? at the same time brandishing their swords, and turning their matchlocks over their heads. The armed Arab struck his stirrups into his horse's sides, and was off in a second. Had there been three or four, my people would have pretended they could not see them, or probably have begged me to retreat beneath the bank to escape observation, as they would never hazard the conflict, without being fully convinced of its

terminating successfully. They are very cowardly, and when in their power, will tyrannize over a weaker party to the utmost; they well know, therefore, the consequences of capture.

The river has suddenly appeared very discoloured, and were it not for the current, I should scarcely have been able to distinguish its bed from the sands on its shore; it is considerably more rapid, owing to the falls of snow and rain in the upper country. At Bagdad the stream is proverbial for its clearness. If this is a specimen, (as I am told it is,) I had certainly formed a very erroneous idea of its transparent properties.

Shortly after sunset we had an imperfect view of Tauk Kesra,* a ruined arch on the site of Ctesiphon, bearing due North across the Desert, about fourteen miles distant in a direct line, but nearly forty when following

* The Arch of Kesra. Kesra is a name proper to the two last races of Persian monarchs.

the course of the stream, so great is its sinuosity.

Previous to entering upon a description of the remains of those cities we are approaching, I shall, on the authority of that learned divine, Newton, trace the history of the Arabs, from the time of their ancestor, Ishmael, who, we learn from sacred history, was born in the year 1910 before Christ, and died in 1773, after having attained the age of one hundred and thirty seven years.

“ It is said of Ishmael that he dwelt in the wilderness, and became an archer: such were the Itureans, whose bows and arrows are famous in all authors; such were the mighty men of Kedar, in Isaiah’s time; and such the Arabs have been from the beginning, and are at this time.

“ It was late before they admitted the use of fire-arms among them; the greater part of them are still strangers to them, and still continue skilful archers. In the time of Moses they dwelt from Havilah unto Shur, that is, before

Egypt, as thou goest towards Assyria: but yet we do not find that they were ever subject to either of their powerful neighbours, the Egyptians or Assyrians. The conquests of Sesostris, the great king of Egypt, are much magnified by Diodorus Siculus; and probably he might subdue some of the southern provinces of Arabia bordering upon Egypt; but he was obliged, as Diodorus informs us, to draw a line from Heliopolis to Pelusium, to secure Egypt from the incursions of the Arabs. They were therefore not subjects, but enemies to the Egyptians; as they were likewise to the Assyrians, for they assisted Belesis and Arbaces in overturning that empire,—assisted them, not as fellow rebels, but as an independent state, with their auxiliary forces.

“The next great conquerors of the East, were Cyrus and the Persians; but neither he nor any of his successors ever reduced the whole body of the Arabs to subjection. They might conquer some of the exterior, but never reached the interior parts of the country: and

Herodotus, the historian, who lived nearest to those times, expressly says,* that the Arabs were never reduced by the Persians to the condition of subjects, but were considered by them as friends, and opened to them a passage into Egypt, which, without the assistance and permission of the Arabs, would have been utterly impracticable : and, in another place, he says, that while Phœnicia, Palestine, Syria, and the neighbouring countries were taxed, the Arabian territories continued free from paying any tribute. They were then regarded as friends, but afterwards they assisted with their forces, Amyrtœus, king of Egypt, against Darius Nothus, and Euagoras, king of Cyprus, against Artaxerxes Mnemon ; so that they acted as friends or enemies to the Persians, just as they thought proper, and as it suited their humour or their interest.

* "Arabes nunquam à Persis in servitutem redacti sunt, sed hospites extiterunt; quum Cambysi aditum in Ægyptum permisissent: quibus invitis haudquaquam fuissent ingressi Persæ Ægyptum."—*Herod. lib. iii. sec. 88, p. 198, Edit. Gale.*

“ Alexander the Great then overturned the Persian empire, and conquered Asia. The neighbouring princes sent their ambassadors to make their submissions. The Arabs alone disdained to acknowledge the conqueror, and scorned to send any embassy, or to take any notice of him. This slight provoked him to such a degree, that he meditated an expedition against them; and the great preparations which he made for it, showed that he thought them a very formidable enemy: but death intervened, and put an end to all that his ambition or resentment had formed against them.

“ Thus they happily escaped the fury of his arms, and were never subdued by any of his successors. Antigonus, one of the greatest of his successors, made two attempts upon them, one by his general Athenæus, and the other by his own son, Demetrius, but both without success. The former was defeated, and the latter was glad to make peace with them, and leave them at their liberty. Neither would they suffer the people employed by Antigonus,

to gather the bitumen on the lake Asphaltites, whereby he hoped greatly to increase his revenue. 'The Arabs fiercely attacked the workmen and the guards, and forced them to desist from their undertaking. So true is the assertion of Diodorus, that 'neither the Assyrians formerly, nor the kings of the Medes and Persians, nor yet of the Macedonians, were able to subdue them; nay, though they led many, and great forces, against them, yet they could not accomplish their attempts.' We find them afterwards sometimes at peace, and sometimes at war with the neighbouring states; sometimes joining the Syrians, and sometimes the Egyptians; sometimes assisting the Jews, and sometimes plundering them; and in all respects acting like a free people, who neither feared nor courted any foreign power whatever.

"The Romans then invaded the East, and subdued the countries adjoining, but were never able to reduce Arabia into the form of a Roman province. It is too common with historians to say that such or such a country was

conquered, when, perhaps, only part of it was so. It is thus that Plutarch asserts, that the Arabs submitted to Lucullus;* whereas the most that we can believe is, that he might subdue some particular tribes; but he was recalled, and the command of the Roman army in Asia was given to Pompey. Pompey, though he triumphed over the three parts of the world, could not yet conquer Arabia. He carried his arms into the country, obtained some victories, and compelled Aretas to submit;† but other affairs soon obliged him to retire, and, by retiring, he lost all the advantages which he had gained.

“ His forces were no sooner withdrawn, than the Arabs made their incursions again into the Roman provinces. Ælius Gallus,‡ in the reign of Augustus, penetrated far into the country, but a strange distemper made terrible havock in his army; and, after two years spent in this

* Plutarch, in Lucullo, passim.

† Plutarch, in Pompeio, p. 640. Edit. Paris, 1624.

‡ Strabo, lib. xvi. p. 1126. Edit. Amstel. 1707.

unfortunate expedition, he was glad to escape with the small remainder of his forces.

“ The Emperor Trajan reduced some parts of Arabia, but he could never subdue it entirely ; and, when he besieged the city of the Hagar-
renes, as Dio says,* his soldiers were repelled by whirlwinds. About eighty years after, the Emperor Severus twice besieged the same city with a numerous army, and a formidable train of military engines ; but he had no better success than Trajan. He made some assaults, but was baffled and defeated, and returned with precipitation as great as his vexation for his disappointment. And if such great emperors and able warriors as Trajan and Severus could not succeed in their attempts, it is no wonder that the following emperors could prevail nothing. The Arabs continued their incursions and depredations, in Syria and other Roman provinces, with equal licence and impunity.

“ Such was the state and condition of the

* Dionis Hist. lib. 68. p. 785. Edit. Leunclav. Hanov.

CHAPTER IV.

City of Ctesiphon.—Extensive mound.—High wall.—Supposed canal.—Ancient remains.—Description of Tauk Kesra.—Search made for coins, &c.—Sack of the palace of Tauk Kesra by the Saracens.—Valuable spoils.—Rich carpet.—Decay of Ctesiphon.—Tomb of Selman Pauk.—Annual pilgrimage to it.—Mosque, tombs, &c.—Seleucia.—Ruins of the city.—Fragments of a bridge.—Sites of the two cities.—Impediments in the way of research.—Calamities of Seleucia.—Bridge of boats over the Dïala.—Arrival at Bagdad.

NOVEMBER 5th.—From daylight until noon, I have passed a succession of broken vases, made of baked clay ; the inner portion of each was highly polished, of various colours, and some had human bones sticking to them. They were all close upon the left bank of the Tigris ; and

it is to be remarked, that whenever a running stream is in the vicinity of an ancient site, these earthen coffins are sure to be found on its bank.

Half an hour after, I crossed over to the right, or eastern bank, when I was on the site of Ctesiphon;* and immediately observed mounds, superficially covered with the same fragments and materials as I have already mentioned in describing those hillocks I had hitherto met with. This spot is called by the natives the "Garden of Kisra." The first mound, which was composed of furnace-burnt bricks as a foundation, and sun-dried, mixed up with chopped straw, for the superstructure, one course separated from another by irregular layers of reeds, extended from the bank of the river, in a northerly direction, for seven hun-

* "The Parthians, in order to do by Seleucia as the Greeks, who built that place, had done by Babylon, built the city of Ctesiphon, within three miles of it, in the track called Chalonitis, in order to dispeople and impoverish it, though it is now the head city of the kingdom."—*Plin. Nat. Hist.* b. vi. c. 26.

dred and fifty feet ; its height and thickness varied from thirty to thirty-six feet.

The elevation of the wall that edged from out this mound, on the margin of the bank, was forty feet. It then formed an angle, and stretched away North-west for eight hundred yards, when there was a breach, or gap, one hundred and thirty-five feet wide, probably once occupied by some grand gate of entrance. The wall, or rampart line, then re-commences, and runs on the same bearings for seven hundred and fifty yards more, when we came to another break, which appeared to be the bed of a canal, as the stratum, or channel, varied from fifteen to twenty feet deep ; the breadth being one hundred and fifty yards, and therefore capable of admitting a very large body of water. The direction of the dry bed of this channel was North-east, and appeared to extend to an unbroken ridge of mounds running North-west and South-east at the distance of eight or nine miles.

The high wall, already followed, embraces an extensive area, where no vestiges of former buildings exist, and runs to the verge of the river. Its summit and sides are covered with the remains of ancient building ; and it is astonishing, that, after the lapse of so many centuries, these walls appear to have lost nothing of their regular construction.

From the bed of the canal, and a quarter of a mile to the North-west, over a space marked by memorials of the past, interspersed with patches of the camel thorn, stands the Tauk Kesra, a magnificent monument of antiquity,* surprising the spectator with the perfect state of its preservation, after having braved the warring elements for so many ages ; without an emblem to throw any light upon its history ; without proof, or character to be traced on any brick or wall.

This stupendous, stately fragment of ages

* See Appendix, H.

long since forgot, is built of fine furnace-burnt bricks, each measuring twelve inches square by two and three quarters thick, and coated with cement. The full extent of the front, or eastern face, is three hundred feet. It is divided by a high semicircular arch, supported by walls sixteen feet thick ; the arch itself making a span of eighty-six feet, and rising to the height of one hundred and three feet. The front of the building is ornamented and surmounted by four rows of small arched recesses, resembling in form the large one. The style and execution of these are most delicate, evincing a fertile invention and great experience in the architectural art.

From the vestibule a hall extends to the depth of one hundred and fifty-six feet East and West, where a wall forms the back of the building, a great portion of which, together with part of the roof, is broken down. In the centre of the wall, or western face of the structure, a doorway, measuring twenty-four

feet high by twelve wide, leads to a contiguous heap of mounds, extending to the bank of the river, about a quarter of a mile distant. The general shape of these hillocks is elliptical, and their circumference two miles.

To the right are fragments of walls, and broken masses of brickwork; to the left, and therefore to the south of the arch, are the remains of vast structures, which, though encumbered with heaps of earth, are yet sufficiently visible to fill the mind of the spectator with astonishment, at the thought that the destroying hand of Time could have failed in entirely concealing, from the inquiring eye, these wrecks of remote antiquity.*

* The natives of this country assert, that the ruins are of the age of Nimrod, of whom, in Scripture, it is said, "And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar."—Gen. chap. x. ver. 10.

A celebrated antiquary, M. de Broses, one of the Presidents of the Royal Academy in Paris, supposes that Calneh stood on the site of Ctesiphon.—*Memoires de l'Academie Royale*, tome xxvii. p. 31.

I dug into the sides and bases of many of these mounds. Their foundations were invariably composed of the fire-burnt brick, while the sun-burnt formed the exterior or higher mass of each heap. I had the satisfaction of discovering a silver coin of one of the Parthian kings, a brass coin of Seleucus Nicator, and three talismanic perforated cylinders, which differ in no respect from the Babylonian. All are in an equally perfect state. There is no doubt that the natives often pick up coins of gold, silver, and copper; for which they always find a ready sale in Bagdad. Indeed, some of the wealthy Turks and Armenians, who are collecting for several French and German Consuls, hire people to go in search of coins, medals, and antique gems: and I am assured they never return to their employers empty-handed.

The riches contained within the venerable pile I have just described appear to have been immense. The sack of the palace by the Saracens, as related by Gibbon, took place in

the A. D. 637. "The capital was taken by assault, and the tumultuous resistance of the people gave a keener edge to the sabres of the Moslems, who shouted with religious transport, 'This is the white Palace of Chosroes! this is the promise of the Apostle of God!' The poor robbers of the Desert were suddenly enriched beyond the measure of their hope or knowledge. Each chamber revealed a new treasure, secreted with art, or ostentatiously displayed. The gold and silver, the various wardrobes and costly furniture, surpassed (says Abulfeda,) the estimate of fancy or numbers. One of the apartments of the palace was decorated with a carpet of silk, sixty cubits in length, and as many in breadth; a paradise, or garden, was depicted on the ground; the flowers, fruits, and shrubs, were imitated by the figures of the gold embroidery, and the colours of the precious stones; and the ample square was encircled by a variegated and verdant border.

“The Arabian General persuaded his soldiers to relinquish their claim, in the reasonable hope that the eyes of the Caliph would be delighted with the splendour of the workmanship. Regardless of the merit of art and the pomp of royalty, the rigid Omar divided the prize among his brethren of Medina: the picture was destroyed; but such was the intrinsic value of the materials, that the share of Ali alone was sold for twenty thousand drams.

“A mule that carried away the tiara and cuirass, the belt and bracelets of Chosroes, was overtaken by the pursuers. The gorgeous trophy was presented to the commander of the faithful, and the gravest of the companions condescended to smile when they beheld the white beard, the hairy arms, and uncouth figure of the veteran, who was invested with the spoils of the great king. The sack of Ctesiphon was followed by its desertion and gradual decay. The Saracens disliked the air and

situation of the place; and Omar was advised by his General to remove the seat of government to the western side of the Euphrates.*

At a distance of five hundred yards North, ten degrees West of Tauk Kesra, is the tomb of Selman Pauk, otherwise Selman the Pure, or Pious,† who, the Turks affirm, was once a Christian, but eventually became a follower of the prophet Mohammed, who appointed him his barber; which situation he filled for many years. Hence, all the professors and operators of chirurgery, phlebotomy, chiropody, "*et hoc genus omne*," perform a yearly pilgrimage from Bagdad to his tomb; which is surrounded by a brick wall, encompassing a good court, and having commodious accommodation, answering every purpose of a caravansary.

To the South-west, and consequently in an oblique direction between the Tauk and the river, stand the ruins of a mosque, and two

* Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, vol. ix. cap. 51.

† See Appendix, I.

mouldering tombs, forming an affecting contrast to its contemporary. These relics contain the ashes of *Hadhaifah*, the secretary of the prophet, and the Caliph Moostasem Billah, who was killed by Hulakoo,* the Mogul conqueror of Persia, and grandson of the famous Zengis, or Ghengis Khan.

Among the scattered fragments of brick-work and loose pieces of tile and stones within the ruined quadrangular wall, enclosing the tombs, I found the exuviæ of snakes in abundance; and from its vicinity to the Tigris, it must severely suffer by the regular overflowings of its waters.

Having examined the remains of Ctesiphon, I crossed over to the site of the once magnificent and populous Greek city,† and at every

* This Prince established the Mogul dynasty.

† “ Seleucia was built by Seleucus Nicator, forty miles from Babylon, at a point of the confluence of the Euphrates with the Tigris, by a canal. There were six hundred thousand citizens here at one time, and all the commerce and wealth of Babylon had flowed into it. The territory on which it stood was called Babylonia; but it was itself a free state,

step had new occasion to muse upon the scene of desolation which presented itself, as far as the eye could reach. Time, violence, and repeated inundations have levelled every thing. I looked in vain for monuments, pillars, aqueducts, and buildings. Bricks of every kind, mixed up with layers of straw; varnished tiles, and pottery of every colour, (the predominant one being blue); stones calcareous, sandy, and granite; flint-glass, shells, and a variety of vitreous and nitrous substances; these, and these alone, compose what remains of the once magnificent Seleucia.

There is not a single entire building; nothing but a small remnant of a wall and a few portions of decayed brickwork, is left to mark the foot of the spoiler, and bid us mourn in silence and solitude over fallen and departed grandeur. The traveller ought to

and the people lived after the laws and manners of the Macedonians. The form of the walls was said to resemble an eagle spreading her wings, and the soil around it was thought the most fertile in the East."—*Plin. Nat. Hist.* b. vi. c. 26.

visit Seleucia, previous to passing over to Ctesiphon ; by so doing, he will not expect to meet with any thing half so grand as the arch which rivets him to the spot, which, in this part of the world, in point of architectural beauty, is perfectly unique.

This structure I surveyed first, so ardent was my solicitude to reach the porch of the building, after having caught a glimpse of it the evening before. With a mind full of its beauties, I passed on to Seleucia ; and there being no building, not even the fragment of one visible, I experienced, I must confess, great grief and disappointment. It is, however, surprising, that so much is still left to mark the sites of these once great cities, situated as they are in a country that is inundated for so many months in the season. Even at this moment, which is the driest time of the whole year, there are pools of water inhabited by large flocks of bitterns ;* and herbage is scattered over the

• The *Ardea stellaris* of Linnæus.

plain ; but on the site of Ctesiphon, the smallest insect under heaven would not find a single blade of grass wherein to hide itself, nor one drop of water to allay its thirst.

Although former travellers who have visited this spot, do not speak of any remains on the river, I have no hesitation in pointing to the fragments of a bridge, which appears once to have connected the two cities, from the vast quantity of ruined materials lying in heaps on either bank, composed of fire-burnt bricks made of argillaceous earth, and a great quantity of detached brickwork beneath the water. The shallowness of the river afforded me an opportunity of observing this very particularly, and induced me to procure the aid of divers, who invariably brought up bricks broken and unbroken, remarkable for their hardness and solidity. Hence I would infer, that these fragments now resting on the river's bed, could only have been appropriated to the purpose already mentioned.

The reader will be better able to judge of

the extent of the irregular mounds and hillocks that overspread the sites of these renowned cities, when I tell him, that it would occupy some months to take the bearings and dimensions of each with accuracy. In this undertaking, great interruption and much molestation would be offered by the Arabs who tend their cattle, sheep, and camels on the spot, and who are so very suspicious, that no excavation can be made without their supposing some hidden treasure has been discovered. Consequently, these people would do all in their power to prevent the antiquary from continuing his researches, or even remaining here for any length of time. At this period it would be impossible to make the attempt, both from the disturbed and unsettled state of the country, which, I lament to add, is scarcely ever in a state of tranquillity, and from the spirit of rebellion and tyranny innate in the heart of all Moslemites from Constantinople to the Erythrean Sea. I do not apply this remark to Greece, as I am in hopes we have driven them from that sacred soil.

The prevailing report and opinion among the Turks at the time I am writing is, that the combined powers of Europe have accomplished this much-wished-for event. I have now only to add, that the greater part of the remains of Ctesiphon extend in a northerly direction; whilst the masses of ruin on the site of Seleucia stretch away to the southward, and are altogether at a greater distance from the bank of the river than Ctesiphon. The Greek city appears to occupy a more considerable tract of country, although its remains are, to all appearance, of lesser magnitude than its Parthian neighbour.*

I shall briefly notice, in this part of my journal, on the authority of Gibbon, the repeated calamities and ultimate ruin of the chief of the Macedonian conquests in Upper Asia. For many ages, Seleucia retained the

* The site of Seleucia is in the neighbourhood of a very ancient place, called Coche, "in conflente Euphratis, fossa perducta atque Tigris," says Pliny: this canal bears the appellative, Nahar Malka, "quod significat fluvius regum."

genuine character of a Grecian colony, renowned for arts, military virtue, and the love of freedom. The independent republic was governed by a senate of three hundred nobles; the people consisted of six hundred thousand citizens. The walls of the city were strong, and as long as concord prevailed among the several orders of the state, the inhabitants viewed with contempt the power of the Parthian: but the madness of faction was sometimes provoked to implore the dangerous aid of the common enemy, who was posted almost at the gates of the colony.

The Parthian monarchs, like the Mogul sovereigns of Hindostan, delighted in the pastoral life of their Scythian ancestors; and the Imperial camp was pitched in the plain of Ctésiphon, on the eastern bank of the Tigris, at the distance of only three miles from Seleucia. The innumerable attendants on luxury and despotism resorted to the court, and the little village of Ctésiphon insensibly grew into a great city.

Under the reign of Marcus, the Roman generals penetrated as far as Ctesiphon and Seleucia, A. D. 165. They were received as friends by the Greek colony; they attacked as enemies the seat of the Parthian kings; yet both cities experienced the same treatment. The sack and conflagration of Seleucia, with the massacre of three hundred thousand of the inhabitants, tarnished the glory of the Roman triumph. Both cities lie about nineteen miles to the South of Bagdad.

NOVEMBER 7th.—It was past midnight before I persuaded myself to quit the mouldering walls of this ancient city. The cloudless sky was studded with stars, and the air so beautifully soft and pure, that I could not be unmindful of being in the land of Chaldea, where the shepherds lay gazing on the same constellations, and from them derived the first lessons of astronomy.

For two hours I had been seated beneath a ruined rampart of the city, which appeared to be the most perfect mass on the desert plain.

It extended five hundred yards North, and rose from beneath the mounds for twenty-five feet. From this spot, by the light of the moon, I beheld, for the last time, the crumbling and solitary ruins. The deep repose of the scene was scarcely disturbed; for the breeze that wafted the sound of the browsing camel's tinkling bell, was all that broke the calm silence that prevailed around me, and

——“Mid Heaven's blue arch serene,
Th' unclouded moon smiled down upon the scene.”

While contemplating these scattered fragments by the light of the moon, the solemnity and stillness of the scene, and the memorials of departed grandeur on all sides, powerfully affected my imagination!

Leaving Seleucia, I proceeded North-west till noon, when I crossed the Diala, over a bridge of boats. Its mouth is sixty yards broad, and at this time the stream was running with rapidity, a proof that the rains had already fallen on the mountains. When this

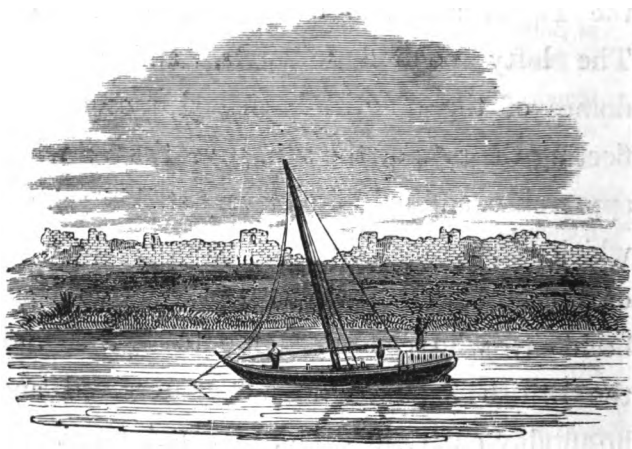
river is low, the natives are unable to drink of its waters, their qualities being so very saline. The people of the country only know this classical river by the appellation of Diala; its apparent course from this place is N. N. W.*

At five in the afternoon, I reached the suburbs of the celebrated residence of the Caliphs; when, to escape observation, I embarked on the Tigris, and had a fine view of Bagdad. The lofty pointed minarets, and swelling domes of the beautifully-shaped mosques reflecting the rays of the sun, gave them a white appearance, and exhibited a very striking effect, which disappeared on my entering the walls of the city; where I was met by two Nou-bechi's †, who conducted me to Aga Minas, the British Agent, who kindly received and hospitably entertained me. This Armenian is an intelligent and active servant of the Indian

* Hence to Koote, the Tigris is called Diglah, from a town of that name about fifty miles to the North of Bagdad.

† Armed footmen of the British residency in the Pashalic.

government; having held the situation of Dragoman to the East India Company's late residents in this city for thirty years. His father was also an effective servant in the time of Sir Harford Jones.



Remains of a Wall on the Site of Seleucia,

CHAPTER V.

Mr. Rich.—His character.—The Pasha Daoud.—Risafah, a lofty minaret.—Village of Kauzumeen.—Mosque.—Tomb of Zobeide.—The Talism Gate.—Inscription.—Monastery of Dervishes.—The Madrasat.—Caravansary and mosque founded by Mirjan.—Number of vagrants.—Their extreme wretchedness.—The Author assumes the Turkish dress.—Tull Akerkouf.—Canal.—Bronze figure.—Extensive ruins.—Robberies of the Arabs.—Circular pillars.—Azad Khaun.—Sheikh Shoubar.—Iskanderia.—Hadjee Suleiman.—Hillah.—Entrance to Babylon.

THE English traveller arriving in this city, will not fail to meet with the greatest attention from all classes of people, on account of the high veneration and respect they bear to the memory of the lamented Mr. Rich, the late British Resident; who upheld the honour of the nation he represented, and at the same time gained the greatest reputation himself,

during an administration of fourteen years.* The Turks and Christians fondly cherish the recollection of his many amiable qualities, and his name is imprinted on their hearts—too deeply, ever to be forgotten. I need hardly add, what heart-felt satisfaction this gave me; and, on walking through the streets, I could not but contrast the deportment of the Moslems with their Persian neighbours, particularly at the city of Shirauz, where the English traveller cannot with any degree of personal safety traverse the town without an attendant of the British Agent, and even then he is often stoned, and always abused and ridiculed.

Bagdad† is well known, from having been

* Mr. Rich was appointed the East India Company's resident at Bagdad, in 1806. In the year 1821, he quitted that city on a visit to Shirauz, (viâ Basra, and Bushire,) whence he was destined never to return, being carried off by an attack of *Cholera Morbus*, after an illness of eight hours. His remains were interred without the city walls; but the heartless Persians could not allow them to repose undisturbed, to the eternal disgrace of the Prince Houssain Ali Mirza; and in 1826, the Envoy to the Persian court removed his remains to the Armenian burying-ground at Ispahan.

† See Appendix, K. This city is called by Marco Polo, *Baldachi*.

the residence of the Caliphs ; and, according to the observations made by several British officers, is in latitude $33^{\circ} 19' 40''$ N. Colonel Macdonald Kinneir makes its longitude $44^{\circ} 24''$ E. That accomplished writer, in his admirable Memoir of the Persian Empire, has given such a correct account of this city, (as also of the town of Hillah, on the Euphrates,) that it would be presumption in me, and only engrossing the time and exhausting the patience of the reader, were I to offer any detailed description ; though I trust for forgiveness in submitting a few notices here, on the principal buildings and monuments still standing to perpetuate the memory of many of the earlier commanders of the faithful.

According to the best-informed Mahomedan writers, the city was commenced by the Caliph Mansoor il Dewaniky, in the year 139, and completed in 146.* This Caliph erected a mosque without the walls, called Imaum Athum, and a college, both which buildings

* It is to be remarked that all these dates are of the Hegira.

are still to be seen; though on a part of the site of the latter, Daoud Pasha has erected a superb mosque, and two stately minarets. This man arrived at Bagdad at the beginning of Suleïman Pasha's government, and was brought up like the other slaves in the palace. From the post of *Mohrdar*, or keeper of the seals, he was elevated to that of *Dufterdar*, or keeper of the records, when Suleiman Pasha gave him one of his daughters in marriage. Being on bad terms with his brother-in-law, he was neglected and slighted.

During this period he gave himself up to the study of divinity and Turkish law, until Abdalla's elevation to the Musnud. This Pasha appointed Daoud likewise to the situation of *Dufterdar*, in which capacity he displayed both wisdom and courage. He also held a similar office under Saaeed Pasha, who wished to make him his *Kehyah*, or lieutenant; but, being suspected of intrigue, he was superseded, and fearing lest he might lose his head, fled to Sulimaniah, where, with the assistance of Mahommed Ali

Mirza, he in a short time succeeded to the Pashalick; in which elevated situation he has ever since remained.*

Mansoor's eldest son, Mahommed il Mahdee, built a lofty minaret, in the year 168, called Risafah, and situated in a bazaar now termed the Thread-market. It is the highest and oldest in the city, and stands near the centre; it is encircled with a Cufic inscription, beautifully executed in brickwork, but nearly defaced. Its spire, whence you may obtain a beautiful view of the river and its environs, still adds grace and dignity to the city. On a clear day the Tauk Kesra at Ctesiphon is plainly discernible.

The celebrated Haroun al Raschid erected a tomb to the memory of his lamented judge, Abu Yusuf, at Kauzumeen, a village about one hour's ride from the walls of Bagdad. That place is much visited by the Moslems,

* Keppel is decidedly wrong, when he asserts that this Pasha was a beggar at the palace gate. I have heard that Daoud was for some time in the service of Sir John Malcolm.

from the circumstance of two descendants of the Prophet being interred there.

The largest mosque in Kauzumeen was built by Shah Ismael, in the year 914; it has since been beautifully adorned by Aga Mahomed Khan, uncle to the present Shah, and the first Persian sovereign that made Tehraun a royal residence.

In the year 198, Haroun's eldest son, Mahomed Ameen, built a mosque, situated within the walls; near which stand the tomb and shrine of the beautiful Zobeide,* the wife and favourite of Al Raschid. This was erected by his second son, Abdalla al Mamoon, in 212. It is, however, a mean and inferior memorial for so celebrated a woman, and, consequently, cannot fail to create disappointment. The building is octangular, capped with a cone, exactly resembling a *pine-apple*, a form never

* “ Nom d'une fille de Giâfer Ben Mansour, que le Khalife Haroun al Raschid épousa solennellement, et qui fut mère du Khalife Amin. Le Pèlerinage qu'elle fit à la Mecque s'est rendu célèbre, à cause des grandes aumônes qu'elle fit sur sa route.”—*D'Herbelôt*.

adopted at the present day: though there is a structure within the city which bears some resemblance to that mode of building; it was erected in the year 622, and is called Sheikh Shahaub-ul Deen.

The Talism gate is well worthy of observation, being the finest and largest in Bagdad, measuring fifty-six feet in height by fifty-one in diameter. It is walled up, in honour of Sultan Murad IV. who quitted the city by it, on his return to Constantinople, after having recovered Bagdad from the Persians. Some writers erroneously suppose, that the gate was built on occasion of the Sultan's triumphal entry; but this custom is only observed at the departure of royalty, from which time the gate is held sacred.

There is now within the walls a caravansary, built by a Pasha in 999; one of its gates is closed up in a like manner, and for a similar reason. The following is a literal translation of the Arabic inscription, written round the outer face of the Talism:

“ In the name of the merciful and beneficent.—‘ *And if Abraham and Ismael take the laws from the temple, our Lord will accept at our hands that thou art the hearer, the wise.*’*—This is what *he* commanded should be built; our Prince and Lord, the Imaum (obedience to whom is binding on all mankind); *Abi’l abbas Ahmed Al nasir li din Illah*, chief of the true believers; the successor appointed by the Lord of all worlds; the evidence of God, (on whom be glory and exaltation,) to all his creatures:—the peace and mercy of God be upon his spotless ancestors; may his true call on mankind to submission, aid, and guidance, continue to be the bounden duty of the faithful, *in listening and attention*. The completion was vouchsafed in the year 618. The mercy of God be on our master Mohammed, and his pious and immaculate house.” †

In 590, the Caliph built a banquetting-house, on the left bank of the Tigris, within the city

* A verse of the Koran, usually introduced in such dedicatory lines. † See Appendix, L.

walls, which, since the time of Sultan Murad, has been a monastery of dervishes, of the Bektash order, so named from their founder, Hadjee Bektash; and, in 625, Moostanser Billah founded a school, which is now a khaun; and the old kitchen is the present Custom-house.

The annexed inscription is to be traced on the walls of the Madrasat, ul Mustansariah, situated at the head of the bridge in Bagdad :

“ In the name of the merciful and beneficent God.—‘ *And there is a sect amongst you who invite to holiness, command piety, and forbid vice; and these are the saved.*’* The servant of God, and his Khalif, Abu Jaafer al Mansoor al Mustanser Billah, chief of the faithful, with whose dominion may God exalt the Moslems, commanded the commencement of this propitious college; looking to the favour of that being who destroyeth not the reward of the pious, and desiring the acceptance of the Lord of worlds, and the chief of prophets;

* A verse of the Koran, as above.

whose excellent commands and dominion may God assist, by the power of whose resplendent kingdom may he exalt the cause of Islam, and by its comeliness bless mankind with the resplendent truth.

“ This glorious college was completed with the aid of the all-powerful, and of the uncontaminate scripture, and with supplications to the strong pillar of support, and this in the year 630. Peace to our master Mohammed the prophet, and to his house.” *

In the year 758, Mirjan, minister to the Sultan, came from Persia, whence he solicited permission to proceed on a pilgrimage to Mecca ; but his subsequent conduct in seizing on the government of Bagdad, proved that this holy project was but a mere pretence. He founded a khaun, or caravansary, which is in good repair to this day ; and a mosque, called after him, Merjaniah, upon the walls of which this inscription is to be seen :

* See Appendix, M.

“ In the name of God, the merciful and the beneficent.—‘ *As to temples, God hath permitted that they should be raised, and that, in them, men should remember his name and should glorify him therein, in the morning and in the evening; men whom neither traffic nor sale beguileth from the remembrance of God.*’* The dependent on the compassion of the most merciful king, Mirjan, son of Abdallah, son of Abdurrahman, the Sultani, the Oolkhani, commenced this: may his devotion find acceptance with God in both worlds; and the peace of God be on our master Mohammed and his family, and his companions, pious and uncontaminate, A. H. 758.”†

The pleasure I derived from making these short excursions in and around the city, was greatly diminished at beholding the numbers of vagrants who were seen lying about the streets; victims of poverty, sickness, and famine. The women and children were truly piteous objects, and in a state of nudity. I never saw such mi-

* From the Koran. † See Appendix, N.

serable examples of human wretchedness. These poor creatures, I was informed, had migrated from Mosul in hopes of finding employment, and escaping that fatal scourge the *cholera morbus*, which raged to such a degree this summer, that there were not people to gather in the harvest. Those who found purchasers, sold their children to the highest bidder: while the remaining inhabitants who were less fortunate, were said to have been seen sacrificing their offspring to their own *uncontrollable hunger*. For the sake of human nature, I sincerely trust this is an exaggeration; I received it from scarcely dubitable authority, as a true, and faithful picture of the suffering people of Mosul.

Those children who were old enough fled from their parents, and one poor boy is now with me, (an only son,) who left his aged and forlorn mother, from the horrible apprehension of sharing a similar fate. In fact, two months ago, young and beautiful girls were publicly

sold in this city for a sum equivalent to ten pounds sterling ! and many of these hapless creatures were Christians !! Let us hasten from the contemplation of this mournful picture !

NOVEMBER 20th.—I proposed visiting an old ruin, about nine miles from the city ; but as the Arabs had been committing some depredations in the neighbourhood, it was deemed advisable by my kind host, Aga Minas, that I should assume the dress of the country, which I strongly recommend to every traveller whose object is a laudable curiosity, and a wish to gain some insight into the manners, habits, and customs of the inhabitants. After equipping myself in a new Turkish dress, I issued from the Agent's house, and crossed the Tigris by a floating bridge of thirty-two boats.* On clearing the walls I was joined by a guard, consisting of five Arabs armed with swords and spears.

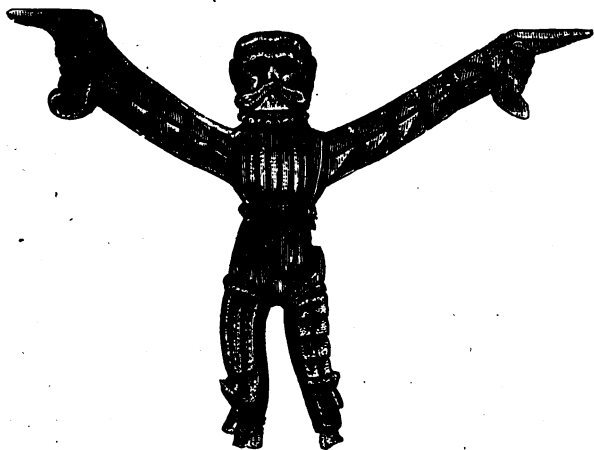
* The river opposite the *Babil-Jisser* is two hundred yards in breadth.

After a walk of three hours, on a bearing due W. N. W., we gained the summit of an elevated mound, supporting a ponderous mass of ruin, which is called by the Arabs Tull Akerkouf, vulgarly *Agergoaf*, and by the Turks Nemroud Tepessy, both which appellations signify the Mound of Nemroud, or Nimrod, not the *Tower* of Nemroud, as it has been translated. Our path was partially strewed with loose pieces of burnt and unburnt brick and tile. At times we saw a dead camel, from which we scared several hungry hawks, that were feasting on the offensive carcase.

At the seventh mile we crossed the dry bed of a canal of great magnitude, supposed by some to be the river Narraga of Pliny, near which, he says, was a city called Hipparenum.* This canal is said to be the remains of the canal of Isa, and is supposed to connect the Tigris

* "Sunt etiamnum in Mesopotamiâ oppida : Hipparenum, Chaldæorum doctrinâ clarum, et hoc, sicut Babylonia, juxta fluvium Narragam, qui dedit civitati nomen. Muros Hipparenorum Persæ diruêre."—*Plin.* lib. vi. cap. 26.

with the river Euphrates, at a point where these rivers approach each other ; but in following its course I found that it discharges itself into the Tigris four miles *below* Bagdad : a circumstance that refutes its identity with the canal of Isa. This channel ran North and South. Hence, until we arrived in the vicinity of the ruins, we passed small parties of Arabs, who were employed in tending their flocks and herds. Not far from one of these encampments I found a bronze figure, apparently of an European, in the costume of the middle ages.



Bronze figure found near Akerkouf.

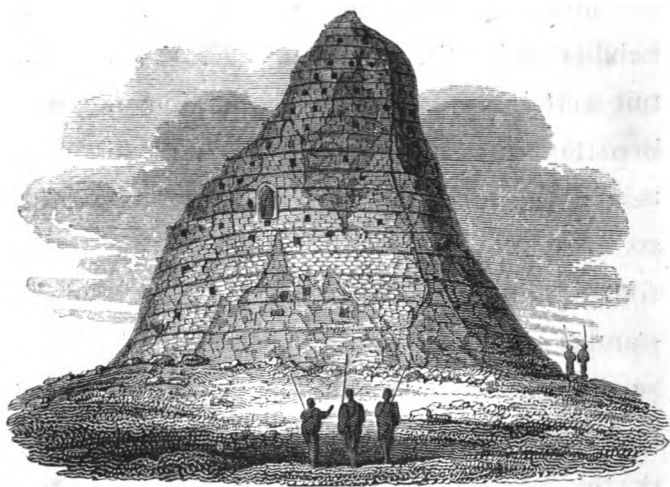
The ruins of a city are here very apparent, extensive undulating mounds stretching towards the South and East; while to the North and West they are comparatively small, and extend only a short distance from their giant-like neighbours. This ruin sweeps irregularly upwards, and its form appears to have been originally square, for the bricks are placed so as to favour this opinion; it does not, however, exactly face the cardinal points, as some former travellers assert. It is entirely composed of sun-dried bricks, made of clay mixed with chopped straw, each measuring a square of nine inches by four in thickness. At every *seventh* * course of bricks, a layer of reeds is placed between the horizontal courses of the brickwork, without any apparent cement. These layers are very regular from top to bottom; but

* Mr. Rich is mistaken, when he says that the layers of reed are between every fifth or sixth layer of bricks, and that the number is not regulated. He has likewise made the circumference of the ruin one hundred feet less than it really is.—*Memoir on the Ruins of Babylon*, p. 41.

the bricks composing this colossal mass are of uncommon beauty, when we consider the material of which they are composed. This structure certainly has been the habitation of some important personage; nay, I almost fancy I beheld the residence of a rich and powerful sovereign.*

The ruin is, without doubt, solid, and is pierced with small holes, which appear to have been designed for the purpose of admitting a free current of air; but some imagine they held the scaffolding when the workmen were employed in its erection. Large wooden beams are passed through, apparently to strengthen the huge fabric of brickwork. On the North-eastern face, nearly in the centre, is an aperture, somewhat resembling a Gothic window; for what purpose it was intended, it is now impos-

* "Cependant on ne peut pas bien décider aujourd'hui à quel dessein cet edifice a été élevé. Peut-être étoit-ce le terrain sur lequel un des premières Califes de Bagdad, ou même un des Rois de Perse qui residoit à al Modaien, avoit une maison de campagne, pour prendre un air fraix et froid, sur la hauteur."—*M. Niebuhr, Voyage en Arabie*, ii. tome p. 248. 4to.



Remarkable ruin, called Tull Akerkouf.

sible to determine. Tavernier relates, that “ a little way from Bagdad, there is the foundation of a city, which may seem to have been a large league in compass. There are some of the walls yet standing, made of burnt brick, ten feet square, and three thick.”* Tavernier, no doubt, alludes to these ruins; he conceived it to be the remains of some tower, built by one

* Tavernier, vol. ii. c. v.

of the Arab princes, for a beacon to assemble his subjects in time of war: this, in all probability, was near the truth. From the summit to the base of the brickwork, it is one hundred and twenty-five feet,* the circumference is four hundred feet, and from the brickwork to the foundation of the rubbish, which now forms its pedestal, it is twenty feet. A vast number of dried bats are to be seen in the small cavities of the structure. I do not think this ruin ever exhibited the written character, or the bitumen which is used throughout the Babylonian remains; nor in searching among the surrounding mounds, could I trace vestiges of building in any mass resembling the remnants of a regular architectural structure; though the surface of these mounds was strewn with broken bricks, earthenware vessels, vitrified pieces of clay, many perfectly black; and small stones, once forming a portion of, but now surviving the clay that formed

* Niebuhr states the height of this ruined monument at seventy Danish feet.

the principal ingredient of every brick. As the rain fell in torrents, I only remained at Akerkouf for two hours: I came prepared to attempt some excavations on its site, but the weather precluded the practicability of it, and compelled us to retrace our steps to Bagdad, where we arrived at nightfall.

My attention now became devoted to the ruins of BABYLON, the parent city of the world, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, the audacious assailant of the empyrean,—now a heap and a wilderness, a dwelling-place for dragons, and bereaved of man; still lowering o'er the Desert, still frowning defiance and disdain of time and the warring elements, though spurned alike by the heel of the Ottoman, the Israelite, and the sons of Ishmael.

With an imagination loaded and oppressed by the recollection of its splendour and its vicissitudes, I hastily concluded a few necessary preparations, and retaining the Turkish dress, started on the morning of the 28th, and crossed the bridge of boats already noticed,

with a small cavalcade consisting of a Chocadar* from the Pasha, who acted as Tissaphernes, one Chaoosh, (a herald, or running footman,) in the service of Aga Minas, and an armed Desert Arab, who considered that his presence would be of more utility in case of any attack on the road, than the united force of a whole caravan.

The Arabs are certainly retrogressive, in point of improvement and civilization. Seven years ago, a robbery on the Hillah road was unheard of; now, it occurs weekly: large caravans are stopped and plundered, and no inquiry or search is made after the audacious perpetrators. In fact, the other day, a rich caravan had scarcely quitted the gates of this city, on its route to Aleppo, before the people of the Desert attacked it, and carried off property to a very considerable amount.

But to return:—Clearing the walls, I dismounted, and proceeded on foot, over an excel-

* Chokhadar, or Ich Agâsi of the Pashalic of Bagdad; one of the pages of the Pasha's presence.

lent road running S. 10° W., while my horsemen went before, and amused themselves by throwing the jereed, an amusement too often described to need any description from me.

The first objects that attract the eye on leaving the city, are two low circular pillars on each side of the road, built chiefly of brick, *inlaid* with the heads of two hundred of the Khezail Arabs, taken by the Pasha's army in their last engagement with this tribe.* A little before nine we passed a khaun, or caravansary, which must once have been a handsome building; but is now forsaken, and falling fast into ruins. It is called Keyah Khaun, from its founder Ahmed, the Kehyah, lieutenant or minister, of Suleiman Pasha;† it is about seven miles and a half from Bagdad.

* The Zobeide Arabs inhabit the whole of this district.

† Rather more than fifty years ago, this three-tailed Bashaw was the Mutessellim (governor) of Bussorah. On the surrender of that city to the Persians, he was taken prisoner, and conveyed to Shirauz, where he remained until the death of Kerim Khan in 1779, at which period he effected his escape, and successfully sued the Porte for the pashalic of Bagdad.

At a distance of five miles from it, is Azad Khaun, a miserable dirty halting-place, built by Omar Pasha in the year of the Hegira 1092. Continuing, as usual, S. 10° W. we passed another caravansary, called by the Arabs Bir-en-neuss, or el-Neuss, its true appellative being Bur-il-nusf, meaning a well half dug out, or the half-way well. There is a Turkish tomb here, but whether of saint or of sinner I could not learn.

From Azad Khaun to this last station, we crossed the remains of several dry water-channels and canals, of great depth and width, some of which are attributed to Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon.* Of these the famed *fluvius regum* of that monarch is not the least important, though at present dry and neglected.

On an elevated and conspicuous mound, within six hundred yards of the road, is a quadrangular ruin, composed of reeds and sun-

* See Appendix, O.

dried bricks, thirty feet high, and two hundred and fifty in circumference. The ground about it was covered with the usual vestiges of former buildings. The spot is called by the natives Sheikh Shoubar, and is visible at a considerable distance. About half-way between the two last stages, and over a small canal, is an old ruinous bridge, of one arch, of the best fire-burnt material.

Next to Mushhed Ali,* the finest hawks in the country for hunting the antelope are taken here. Antelopes are found in the neighbourhood in great numbers; for during the whole of the day, we saw these beautiful quadrupeds feeding among the thistles and short herbage, occasionally bounding before us as we disturbed them by our presence. They are frequently shot by the Arabs, who are too lazy to take them in the chase. From Khaun Azad to this

* This city, according to Kinneir, was founded by Alexander the Great, and was, for a considerable time, called Alexandria. It is thirty miles from Hillah, and four from Kufa, a town founded by Omar.

place I made the distance seven miles and a half.

One hour before sunset brought us to a very spacious caravansary, the customary halting place. It is called Iskanderia, from the ruins of a village, and the bed of a canal in the neighbourhood. A ruinous khaun of the same name is still standing, though now deserted. The present inhabited building was erected during the last century, at the expense of the late Mohammed Hussein Khan, formerly Nizam-ad-Dowlah, or Home Minister of Futteh Ali Shah, for the convenience of Persian pilgrims, when on their road to Messhed Ali, the most distinguished place of pilgrimage which they possess. From several ridges of earth covered with vestiges of building, lying in every direction, I should imagine this spot to be the site of some considerable town ; and the bricks are so plentiful, that the material of which the menzil is constructed, was gathered upon the spot. Iskanderia is two hours journey from Bir-el-Nusf, and lies in latitude $32^{\circ} 56' 18''$, longitude 4°

west of Bagdad. The water is very noxious here, as well as at all the caravanserais between Bagdad and Hillah.

NOVEMBER 29th.—We advanced at daylight, in the usual direction south, varying at intervals a little to the eastward, when two hours and three-quarters brought us to a mean building, called Hadjee Suleiman. It was founded by an Arab, upon whose family the Sultan Murad conferred the title of *Beg*, answering to our *Baronet*, as it is hereditary—with this difference, that on the father's death, should there be one or more sons, they all enjoy the title at the same time.

At this caravansary a deep canal crosses the road, cut from the Euphrates, near the village of Naseriat, which bears north twenty-five degrees west. Journeying for two hours more we reached Muhawwil, where there is a village of Fellahs, and consequently some cultivation is visible, for the first time since we quitted Bagdad. In fact, the whole country is an unin-

teresting, dull, and flat plain, without an object to please the eye, or relieve the monotonous irksome scene, except the abrupt embankments of canal beds. The dreariness of this tract forcibly elucidates the words of the prophet Jeremiah :—" I was truly led through the wilderness, through a land of deserts and of pits, through a land of drought, and where no man dwelt." *

The distance is fourteen miles from the fine khaun at Iskandaria, to Muhawwil ; which place I consider to be only separated from the commencement of the site of ancient Babylon, by the high embankments of three canals, (one of which, I am inclined to think, may have been the ditch of the venerable city ;) over the first of which is a bridge of one arch, (decidedly modern) † and a large body of running water, (introduced from the Euphrates by a Pasha,

* Jeremiah, chap. ii. v. 6.

† This bridge has since fallen in.

for the purposes of irrigation,) taking a direction east and west. Hence vestiges of former ancient edifices are discovered, ramifications of which extend for an immense distance over the desert.

Half an hour before sunset I entered the suburbs of Hillah, and crossed a bridge of thirty-four boats, constructed of pontoons, like that of Bagdad, but in worse repair. I ascertained the breadth of the Euphrates, at this point, to be 150 yards. From the last caravansary at Muhawwil, the road was covered, on every side, with irregular hillocks and mounds, formed over masses of ruin, presenting, at every step, memorials of the past. In fact, our path lay through the great mass of ruined heaps on the site of "shrunk Babylon;"—and I am perfectly incapable of conveying an adequate idea of the dreary, lonely nakedness that appeared around me, on entering the gates of the once mighty metropolis, where "the queen of nations" sat en-

throned; nor can I portray the overpowering sensation of reverential awe that possessed my mind, while contemplating the extent and magnitude of ruin and devastation on every side.

CHAPTER VI.

Extensive mounds.—The Mujellibah.—Town of Hillah.—Its situation, filthy state, &c.—Mahmoud Beg, the present governor.—Gardens.—Rapidity of the Euphrates.—Remarks on ancient Babylon.—The city built by Semiramis.—Extent of the walls.—Erection of a bridge.—Palaces.—Temple to Jupiter.—The city enlarged and beautified by Nebuchadnezzar.—Hanging gardens.—Canals.—Ancient splendour of the city.—Taken by Cyrus.—Besieged and captured by Darius.—Height of the walls.—Decay and desolation of Babylon.

AFTER passing the second canal embankment, a circular mound of great elevation appeared on the right of the road. The superficies of its summit and sides was covered with fragments of buildings, composed of furnace-burnt brick, bitumen, reeds, and pieces of stone engraved with the arrow-headed writing upon them; while portions of the ground in the immediate vicinity were white with nitre.

Three hundred yards further, there is another of much greater altitude, its vertex being thickly covered with broken painted tile, glass, and bricks. Hence dependent mounds branch off in every direction, all of equal antiquity with Babylon itself.

Two miles beyond this is a massive embankment, extending towards the east and west, and seeming to enclose the ruins at either extremity. Its superficies exhibits fragments of decayed brick, stones, pottery, and tile. To the south, at about a quarter of a mile to the right of the road, is a vast mountain of ruin, (the Mujellibah,) towering above a series of intervening mounds in inexpressible grandeur. Although no very distinct traces of a ditch can be found, nor can any decided characteristic mark of the exterior walls of the venerable city be discovered by the superficial investigator; yet, from its present appearance and situation, I cannot entertain the shadow of a doubt of its being a remnant of those ruined masses; and could the antiquary prosecute an unin-

interrupted, comprehensive, and close examination, he would, in all probability, discover the line of these long-sought mural demarcations. Can we ever sufficiently lament the circumstance of the country being in the hands of barbarians?

The distance of the before mentioned embankment from Hillah is full five miles, and the circular mounds eight.* Hillah † itself is distant from Bagdad forty-nine miles; it is situated in latitude $32^{\circ} 31' 18''$, longitude $44^{\circ} 20'$ east of Greenwich. The accurate Niebuhr has placed it in latitude $32^{\circ} 28'$, and Beauchamp $32^{\circ} 25'$. The latter performed the journey twice from Bagdad to Hillah, in sixteen hours and thirty minutes. The town was built in the year of the Hegira 495, from the ruins of Babylon, which, on the eastern side of the river, lie about two miles distant.

Hillah is an insignificant place, and nearly

* The limits of the celebrated city, by Strabo's computation, is 385 furlongs, by Diodorus 360, by Curtius 368, and Herodotus (the oldest author of them all) 480; or a little more than sixty miles in circuit.

† See Appendix P.

rivals the city of Bussorah in filth and offensive effluvia. Its population has been decreasing, particularly since it became the scene of contention and bloodshed about two years and a half ago: I could not learn the amount of it with any degree of precision, but I think it may be estimated at six thousand souls. The present governor, Mahmoud Beg, or rather Bey, is an officer in the service of the Pasha of Bagdad: he farms it for four lacs of raej piâstres yearly, a sum equivalent to £7000 sterling.

The gardens in the vicinity are extremely productive, although agriculture is greatly neglected; in fact, a few words will forcibly describe its present state, and exhibit the poverty, indolence, oppression, and desolation that reign over it.

I was much struck with the force and rapidity of the Euphrates at Hillah, from having always heard it asserted that the Tigris flowed more swiftly. At this point the attribute is inapplicable; for, at the time I am writing, the stream is pursuing its course at the rate

of three knots and a half an hour, while the Tigris flows at scarcely three. * From the house in which I lodged, (about two furlongs from the bridge,) I could at night distinctly hear the rushing of the water beneath the bridge; whereas it is never audible at Bagdad, not even to those who live on the brink, and opposite the floating bridge. Hence, I conceive that the epithet "sluggish," when applied to the majestic Euphrates, is improper.

Diodorus Siculus, who wrote about fifty years before the birth of Christ, observes, that the city was in ruins long before his time, and that the spot was an object of interest and inquiry. The following observations on ancient Babylon are so minute and elaborate, that they may not prove unacceptable.

"Semiramis, who was naturally of an aspiring spirit, and ambitious to excel all her predecessors in glorious actions, employed all

* In May 1828, I again crossed these rivers, and ascertained their respective velocity. The Euphrates flowed past Hillah at seven knots an hour, and the Tigris at five knots and a half.

her thoughts about the building of Babylon; and having provided architects, artificers, and all other necessities for the undertaking, she employed two millions of men in building of the city. It was so erected, as that the river Euphrates ran through the middle of it, and surrounded with a wall of three hundred and sixty furlongs in circuit, and adorned with many stately turrets; and such was the state and grandeur of the work, that the walls were of that breadth, as that six chariots abreast might be driven together upon them. The height was such, as exceeded all men's belief that heard of it (as Ctesias relates).

“ But Clitarchus, and those who afterwards went over with Alexander into Asia, have written that the walls were three hundred and sixty-five furlongs, the queen making them of that compass, to the end that the furlongs should be as many in number, as the days of the year. They were of brick, cemented with bitumen; in height, as Ctesias says, fifty orgyas, (each six feet,) but, as some of the later authors report, but fifty cubits only, and that

the breadth was but a little more than what would allow two chariots to be driven in front. There were two hundred and fifty turrets; in height and thickness, proportionable to the largeness of the wall. It is not to be wondered at, that there were so few towers upon a wall of so great a circuit, being that in many places round the city, there were deep morasses, so that it was judged to no purpose to raise turrets there, where they were so naturally fortified. Between the wall and the houses, there was a space left round the city of two hundred feet.

“ That the work might be the more speedily despatched, to each of her friends was allotted a furlong, with an allowance of all expenses necessary for their several parts, and commanded all should be finished in a year’s time, which being diligently perfected with the queen’s approbation, she then made a bridge over the narrowest part of the river, five furlongs in length; on either side of the river she raised a bank as broad as the wall, and with great cost drew it out in length an hundred furlongs. She built like-

wise two palaces at each end of the bridge, on the banks of the river, where she might have a prospect over the whole city, and make her passage, as by keys, to the most convenient places in it, as she had occasion.

“ And whereas the Euphrates runs through the midst of Babylon, making its course to the south, the palaces lie the one on the east, and the other on the west side of the river, both built at exceeding costs and expense. For that on the west had a high and stately wall, made of well-burnt bricks, sixty furlongs in compass, (seven miles and a half;) within this was drawn another, of a round circumference, upon which were portrayed on the bricks, before they were burnt, all sorts of living creatures, as if it were to the life, laid with great art in curious colours. This wall was in circuit forty furlongs, three hundred bricks thick, and in height (as Ctesias says,) fifty orgyas, or one hundred yards, upon which were turrets one hundred and forty yards high.

“ The third and most inward wall immedi-

ately surrounded the palace, thirty furlongs in compass, and far surmounted the middle wall both in height and thickness, and on this wall and towers were represented the shapes of all sorts of living creatures, artificially represented in the most lively colours. To this palace likewise she built three gates, under which were apartments of brass for entertainments, into which passages were opened by a certain engine.

“ This palace far excelled that on the other side of the river, both in greatness and adornments. For the outmost wall of that, (namely on the west,) made of well-burnt brick, was but thirty furlongs in compass. When the river was turned aside into a reservoir, and a vault built across its old bed, the stream was suffered to flow over the work in its old channel, so that Semiramis could go from one palace to the other by this vault, without passing over the river. She made, likewise, two brazen gates, at either end of the vaults, which continued to the time of the Persian empire.

“ In the MIDDLE OF THE CITY, she built a

temple to Jupiter, whom the Babylonians call Belus, of which, since writers differ among themselves, and the work is now wholly decayed through length of time, there is nothing that can with certainty be related concerning it; yet it is apparent that it was of exceeding great height; and that, by the advantage of it, the Chaldean astrologers exactly observed the setting and rising of the stars. The whole was built of brick cemented with bitumen, with great art and cost. Upon the top were placed three statues of beaten gold, of Jupiter, Juno, and Rhea, with other splendid vessels, tables, and ornaments of gold and precious stones, weighing altogether about six thousand Babylonish talents. But all these the Persian kings sacrilegiously carried away, and length of time has either altogether consumed or much defaced the palaces, and the other structures, so that at this day but a small part of this Babylon is inhabited, and the greatest part which lay within the wall is turned into pasture and tillage.”*

* Diodorus Siculus, book ii. chapter 3.

After Nineveh was destroyed, Babylon became the queen of the East. Semiramis is said by some, and Belus, who is probably the same as Nimrod, by others, to have founded this city. It was Nebuchadnezzar, however, that made it one of the wonders of the world; he enlarged and beautified it to such a degree, that he may, in a manner, be said to have built it, as he boasts, (in *Daniel* iv. 30.) It was, according to the lowest account given of it by ancient historians, a regular square forty-five miles in compass, enclosed by a wall two hundred feet high and fifty broad, in which there were one hundred gates of brass. Its principal ornaments were, the temple of Belus, in the middle of which was a tower of eight stories of building, upon a base of a quarter of a mile square; a most magnificent palace; and the famous hanging gardens, which were an artificial mountain raised upon arches, and planted with trees of the largest as well as the most beautiful sorts.

The old palace was four miles in compass;

the new, built by Nebuchadnezzar, was four times as large. Two canals were made by Nebuchadnezzar a hundred miles above the city : one on the eastern side of the Euphrates, called Naharmalcha, or the royal river, by which the Euphrates was let into the Tigris ; the other on the western side, called Pallacopas, by which the redundant waters of the Euphrates were carried into a vast lake forty miles square, contrived not only to lessen the inundation, but for a reservoir, with sluices, to water the barren country on the Arabian side. There were also prodigious banks of brick and bitumen carried a long way on each side of the river, to keep it within its channel.”—*Dean Prideaux’s Connection of the Old and New Testament.*

Babylon was a very great and a very ancient city, as well as Nineveh. It is indeed generally reckoned less than Nineveh ; for according to Strabo, it was only 385 furlongs in compass : but Herodotus, who was an older author than any of them, represents it of the

same dimensions as Nineveh, that is, 480 furlongs, or above 60 miles in compass; but the difference was, that Nineveh was constructed in the form of a parallelogram, and Babylon was an exact square, each side being 120 furlongs in length. So that, according to this account, Babylon occupied more ground than Nineveh; for by multiplying the sides, one by the other, it will be found, that Nineveh contained within its walls only 13,500 furlongs, and Babylon 14,400. It was too as ancient, or more ancient than Nineveh; for in the words of Moses, speaking of Nimrod, (*Genesis*, chap. x. v. 10.) it was *the beginning of his kingdom*, that is, the first city, or the capital city in his dominions. Several heathen authors say, that Semiramis, but most, (as Quintus Curtius asserts,) that Belus built it; and Belus was very probably the same as Nimrod. But whoever was the first founder of this city, we may reasonably suppose that it received very great improvements afterwards, and Nebuchadnezzar

particularly repaired, enlarged, and beautified it to such a degree, that he may in a manner be said to have built it; as he boasted himself, (*Daniel*, chap. iv. v. 30.) “Is not this great Babylon that I have built for the house of the kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?”—Nor is this asserted only in Scripture, but is likewise attested by heathen authors—Megasthenes, Berosus, and Abydenus,—whose words are quoted by Josephus and Eusebius. By one means or other, Babylon became so great and so famous a city, as to give name to a very large empire; and it is called in Scripture “great Babylon;” “the glory of kingdoms;” “the beauty of the Chaldees’ excellency;” the “golden city;” the “lady of kingdoms;” the “praise of the whole earth:” and its beauty, strength, and grandeur; its walls, temples, palaces, and hanging gardens; the banks of the river, and the artificial canals and lake, made for the draining of that river in the seasons of

its overflowings, are described with such pomp and magnificence by heathen authors, that it might deservedly be reputed one of the wonders of the world. Its gates of brass, and its broad walls, are particularly mentioned in Scripture: the city had a hundred gates, twenty-five on each side, all made of solid brass: its walls, according to Herodotus, were three hundred and fifty feet in height, and eighty-seven in thickness, and six chariots could go abreast upon them, as Diodorus affirms after Ctesias.

The city was taken in the night of a great annual festival, while the inhabitants were dancing, drinking, and revelling; and, as Aristotle reports, it had been taken three days, before some parts of the city perceived it: but Herodotus's account is more modest and probable; that the extreme parts of the city were in the hands of the enemy, before they who dwelt in the middle of it suspected any thing of their danger. After this it never recovered its ancient splendour; from an imperial, it became a tributary city; from being governed

by its own kings, and governing strangers, it was in its turn governed by strangers; and the seat of empire being transferred to Shushan, it decayed by degrees, till it was reduced at last to utter desolation.

Xenophon informs us, that Cyrus obliged the Babylonians to deliver up all their arms upon pain of death, distributed their best houses among his officers, imposed a tribute upon them, appointed a strong garrison, and compelled the Babylonians to defray the charge, being desirous to keep them poor, as the best means of keeping them obedient.

But, notwithstanding these precautions, they rebelled against Darius, and, in order to hold out to the last extremity, took all their women, and each man choosing one of them, out of those of his own family whom he liked best, they strangled the rest, that unnecessary mouths might not consume their provisions. They sustained the siege and all the efforts of Darius for twenty months; and at length the city was taken by stratagem.

As soon as Darius had made himself master of the place, he ordered three thousand of the principal men to be crucified, and thereby fulfilled the prophecies of the cruelty which the Medes and Persians would use towards the Babylonians; he likewise demolished the wall, and took away the gates, neither of which, saith Herodotus, had Cyrus done before.* But either Herodotus or Berosus must have been mistaken; or we must suppose that the orders of Cyrus were never carried into execution; or we must understand Herodotus to speak of the inner wall, as Berosus spoke of the outer: and yet it does not seem very credible, when the walls were of that prodigious height and thickness, that there should be an inner and an outer wall too, much less that there should be three inner and three outer walls, as Berosus affirms.

Herodotus computes the height of the wall

* Muros circumcidit, et portas omnes amolitus est; quorum neutrum Cyrus jecerat prius eidem a se captæ.—Herod., lib. 3. cap. p. 223.—Edit. Gale.

to be two hundred cubits, but later authors reckon it much lower; Quintus Curtius at one hundred; Strabo, who is a more exact writer, at fifty cubits. Herodotus describes it as it was originally; and we may conclude, therefore, that Darius reduced it from two hundred to fifty cubits.

Xerxes, after his return from his unfortunate expedition into Greece, partly out of religious zeal, being a professed enemy to image worship, and partly to reimburse himself after his immense expenses, seized the sacred treasures, and plundered or destroyed the temples and idols of Babylon.—Such was the state of Babylon under the Persians.

When Alexander came thither, though Quintus Curtius says that the whole circuit of the city was three hundred and sixty-eight furlongs, yet he affirms that only for the space of ninety furlongs it was inhabited. The Euphrates having been turned out of its course by Cyrus, and never afterwards restored to its former channel, all that side of the country

was flooded by it. Alexander indeed purposed to have made Babylon the seat of his empire, * and actually set men at work to rebuild the temple of Belus, and to repair the banks of the river; but he met with some difficulties in the work, and death soon after put an end to this and all his other projects, and none of his successors ever attempted it; and Seleucia being built a few years afterwards in the neighbourhood, Babylon in a little time became *wholly desolate*.

Seleucia not only robbed it of its inhabitants, but even of its name, being called also Babylon by several authors; quæ tamen Babylonia cognominatur. (Plinii Nat. Hist.) We learn further from a fragment of Diodorus Siculus, which is produced by Valesius, and quoted from him by Vitranga, that a king of Parthia, or one of his peers, surpassing all the famous tyrants in cruelty, omitted no sort of

* Arrian de Exped. Alex. lib. vii. cap. 17. Strabo, lib. xvi. p. 738. Edit. Paris, p. 1073. Edit. Amstel. 1707.

punishment, but sent many of the Babylonians, and for trifling causes, into slavery, and burnt the forum and some of the temples of Babylon, and demolished the best parts of the city. This happened about 130 years before Christ. *

* Bishop Newton on the Prophecies.

CHAPTER VII.

Description of Babylon by Herodotus.—Its great extent.—Principal structures.—The castellated palace.—Temple and tower of Belus.—Tunnel made by Semiramis under the Euphrates.—The Belidian and Cissian Gates.—Extraordinary number of gates to the city.—Account of the Tower of Belus.—Its elevation.—Chapels attached to it.—Sepulchre of Belus.—Large statue.—Height of the tower, its form, &c.—Conjectures respecting it.—Extensive ranges of walls.—Supposed removal of ruins.—Concluding remarks on Babylon.

ACCORDING to the description of this city by Herodotus, it stood in a large plain: the exterior of it was a square, surrounded by a lofty wall; and it was divided into two equal parts by the Euphrates, which passed through it. In the centre of one of these divisions, stood the temple and tower of Belus; in the

other, the spacious palace of the king. We have already spoken of the extraordinary dimensions of the wall that surrounded Babylon; which are variously estimated at from 360 to 480 stades. The last of these numbers is (as we have seen) from Herodotus, whose measures, both of the *enceinte* and every other part, are enormous and improbable, occasioned, as we are ready to believe, by corruptions of the text. As an instance of the latter, he is made to say, that reeds were placed at every thirtieth course of brick work, in the Babylonian buildings; but modern travellers find them at every sixth, seventh, or eighth course, in Aggarkuf, apparently a Babylonish building; and M. Beauchamp discovered them at *every* course, in some of the buildings in Babylon. We have therefore disregarded his calculations on the present occasion.

Even the dimensions given by Strabo are beyond probability, as far as respects the *height* of the walls, which he reckons at fifty cubits, or seventy-five feet. The thickness, thirty-two

feet, if meant of an earthen rampart faced with brick, falls short of our modern ramparts, which are about forty-eight feet at the base; the parapet alone being eighteen feet, yet leaving an ample space for two carriages to pass each other, which is the most that Strabo says of the space on the wall of Babylon. As a *canon-proof* parapet was not required at Babylon, *several* carriages might have gone abreast on a rampart of equal solidity with ours. There is, therefore, nothing extraordinary in this particular.

Respecting the height and thickness of the walls of Babylon, there are great variations in the different reports. Probably, we ought to receive the accounts of the later writers as the most correct; for the same reason that we gave a preference to their statements respecting the extent of the city. The Macedonians and latter Greeks had more leisure to examine and measure the objects that presented themselves, than casual observers. Pliny seems to have copied Herodotus; whilst Strabo probably fol-

lowed the Macedonian reports. Diodorus also makes a striking distinction between the accounts of the *early* and the *later* writers. It may have been, that fifty cubits, or about seventy-five feet, was the height of the city wall, measured, perhaps, from the bottom of the ditch; and the thickness, thirty-two.

The following are the statements of the different authors, respecting the measures of Babylon.

	Circuit of stadcs.	Height of the walls.		Breadth of the walls.	
		Cubits.	Feet.	Cubits.	Feet.
Herodotus.....	480	200	= 300	50	= 75
Pliny, 60 M. P....	480				
Ctesias	360*		300		
Clitarchus.....	365				
Curtius	368	100	= 150		32
Strabo	385	50	= 75		32

With respect to the two principal structures in this stupendous city, the *castellated palace*, (called by some, the citadel,) and the *temple* and *tower* of *Belus*,—the general description of the

* Fifty *orgyia* are given; it should probably be fifty cubits.

first, is given by Diodorus; of the latter, by Herodotus. They are both wonderful in their kind: the first, for the extent of the ground which it covered, and which is represented to have been a square of near a mile and a half; the other for its bulk and height, its base alone being said to be a *cubic stade*, surmounted by seven towers, which successively diminished as they rose. More will be said concerning this tower in the sequel; when it will appear, that there must either be an error in the text of Herodotus in this place, or that he had been grossly deceived in his information.

Herodotus has not said in which of the divisions of the city the temple and palace were respectively situated; but it may be pretty clearly collected from Diodorus, that the temple stood on the *east* side, and the palace on the *west*; and the remains found at the present day accord with this idea. For, Diodorus describes the great palace to be on the *west* side, the lesser palace on the *east*; and there also was the

brazen statue of *Belus*. Now, he makes such a distinction between the two palaces, as plainly shows, that the one on the west was to be regarded as THE PALACE; and, consequently, was *the* palace intended by those, who represent a palace to answer on the *one* side, to the temple of Belus on the *other*. It is also to be inferred from Herodotus, Clio, 181, that the palace and the citadel were the same: he says, "the royal palace fills a large and strongly defended space," in the centre of one of the divisions. Diodorus says, that the temple stood in the centre of the *city*; Herodotus, in the centre of *that division* of the city in which it stood, as the palace in the centre of *its* division.

The description of Diodorus is pointed, with respect to the fact that the palace was near to the bridge, and consequently to the river bank: and he is borne out by the accounts of Strabo and Curtius, both of whom represent the hanging gardens to be very near the river; and all agree that they were within,

or adjacent to, the square of the *fortified palace*.*

They were supplied with water, drawn up by engines from the Euphrates. Consequently, the palace should have stood nearer to the centre of the city itself, than to that of the division in which it stood, since the division was more than four miles broad; and it appears natural enough that the princess should avail herself of the prospect of a noble river, a stadium in breadth, flowing near the palace, instead of withdrawing two miles from it.† And

* Strabo, p. 738, says, that “the Euphrates flows through the middle of the city; and the pensile gardens are adjacent to the river, from whence they were watered.”

† Diodorus has described a *vaulted passage* under the bed of the Euphrates, by which the queen (SEMIRAMIS) could pass from one palace to the other, on different sides of the river, (which was a stadium in breadth, according to Strabo, p. 738,) without crossing it. This serves at least to show, that the palaces were very near to the river banks.

At a time when a tunnel, of more than half a mile in length, under the Thames, is projected, it may not be amiss to mention the reported dimensions of the tunnel made by Semiramis, under the Euphrates; which, however, was no more than 500 feet in length, or less than one-fifth of the

it appears probable, that the temple was also at no great distance from the opposite bank of the river; that is, the *eastern* bank.*

A presumptive proof of the supposed position of the temple, should the words of Diodo-

projected tunnel under the Thames. That of Semiramis is said to have been fifteen feet in breadth and twelve in height, to the springing of the arch; perhaps twenty in all. The ends of the vault were shut up with brazen gates. Diodorus had an idea that the Euphrates was five stadia in breadth.—See lib. ii. c. i.

The Euphrates was turned out of its channel, in order to effect this purpose. Herodotus, who is silent concerning the tunnel, says, that the river was turned aside, in order to build a bridge. Diodorus describes a bridge also. There is an absurd story told by both these historians, respecting the disposal of the water of the river, during the time of building the bridge, &c. According to them, the water was received into a vast reservoir, instead of the obvious and usual mode of making a new channel, to conduct the river clear of the work constructing in its bed into the old channel, at a point lower down.

* Here it is proper to remark, that there is this specific difference between the descriptions of Herodotus and Diodorus: the first says, that the centres of the two divisions were occupied, respectively, by the palace and temple; but Diodorus, by two palaces; and although he speaks of the temple also, yet he does not point out its situation. The square of the temple itself was two stadia.

rus be regarded as ambiguous, is, that the gate of the city, named *Belidian*, and which we must conclude to be denominated from the temple, appears pretty clearly to have been situated on the *east* side. When Darius Hystaspes besieged Babylon, (Thalia, 155, *et seq.*) the *Belidian* and *Cissian* gates were opened to him by Zopyrus; and the Babylonians fled for refuge to the temple of Belus, as, we may suppose, the nearest place of security. The *Cissian* or *Susian* gate must surely have been in the eastern front of the city, as Susa lay to the east; and, by circumstances, the *Belidian* gate was near it, as the plan was laid that *Persian* troops were to be stationed opposite to these gates; and it is probable that matters would be so contrived, as to facilitate, as much as possible, the junction of the two bodies of Persian troops that were first to enter the city, as a kind of forlorn hope.

It may also be remarked, that the gates at which the feints were made, previous to the opening of the *Belidian* and *Cissian*, were those

of Ninus, Chaldea, and Semiramis. The first, towards Ninus or Nineveh, must have been, of course, to the *north*, and the Chaldean to the south; and perhaps that of Semiramis to the *north-east*, between the Belidian and Ninian, as that of Cissia to the south-east, between the Belidian and Chaldean. As it is unquestionable that the Ninian and Cissian gates were in the eastern division of Babylon, since the countries whence they are respectively denominated lie to the east of the Euphrates, it may be collected that the attack was confined to that division alone, (and what army could invest a fortress thirty-four miles in circuit?) If this be admitted, the Belidian gate, and temple of Belus, must have stood on the east side of the Euphrates.*

* Herodotus says, that there were a hundred gates in the circuit of the city, which being a space of thirty-four miles, allows three gates to each mile. It is certain that in modern fortresses, the communications with the country are not so numerous, in proportion to their extent; nor, on the other hand, are they so far asunder as to have only three in a front of eight and a half miles. Probably the rest might have been smaller portals, which were shut up during a siege.

Taking for granted, then, that the tower of Belus stood in the eastern division of the city, let us examine the accounts of it.

It appears that none of the Greeks who describe it, had seen it till after it had been either ruined by Xerxes, or gone so far to decay, that its original design was not apparent. Herodotus himself, therefore, admitting that he viewed it, might not be a perfect judge of the design, or of the original height of the superstructure. This may account for his exaggerated description; perhaps imposed on him, by some of the citizens of Babylon, long after the upper stories had fallen to ruin. The mass of rub-

It may indeed be concluded, that there were fewer gates and communications with the country on the west, than elsewhere; for it may be recollected, that Alexander wished to enter the city by the west, (after his return from India,) in order to avoid the evil foretold by the soothsayers; but was compelled to give up the attempt, by reason of the marshes and morasses on that side.—(See Arrian, lib. vii.)—We are told also by Diodorus, lib. ii. chap. 1., that the number and depth of the morasses round about Babylon, made a smaller number of towers, in the nature of bastions, necessary for the defence of the wall. There were only two hundred and fifty of these, in the whole circuit of thirty-four miles.

bish, mentioned by Strabo, seems to prove this.

All the descriptions are very brief; and Strabo is the only one who pretends to give the positive measure of the elevation of the tower; though all agree in stating it to be very great. The square of the temple, says Herodotus, was *two* stadia (one thousand feet;) and the tower itself *one* stadium; in which Strabo agrees. The former adds, "In the midst, a tower rises, of the solid depth and height of one stadium; upon which, resting as a base, seven other turrets are built in regular succession. The ascent is on the outside, which, winding from the ground, is continued to the highest tower; and in the middle of the whole structure, there is a convenient resting-place. In the last tower is a large chapel, in which is placed a couch, magnificently adorned; and near it a table of solid gold, but there is no statue in the place." Clio, 181.—He afterwards describes another chapel, lower down in the structure, with golden statues, tables, and altars:

all of which appear to have been forcibly taken away by Xerxes, who also put the priest to death.

Strabo says, that the *sepulchre* of Belus was a *pyramid* of *one stadium* in height, whose base was a square of like dimensions; and that it was ruined by Xerxes. Arrian agrees in this particular; and both of them say, that Alexander wished to restore it, that is, we may suppose, both the tower and temple, but that he found it too great a labour: for it is said that ten thousand men were not able to remove the rubbish, in the course of two months. Arrian calls it a stupendous and magnificent fabric; and says, that it was situated in the *heart* of the city. Diodorus, lib. ii. chap. 1. says, that it was entirely gone to ruin, in his time; so that nothing certain could be made out, concerning its design, but that it was of an exceeding great height, built of brick, and cemented with bitumen; in which the others generally agree.

Diodorus adds, that on the top was a statue

of Belus, forty feet in height, in an upright posture. It has been the practice to make the statues placed on the tops of buildings, of such a height as to appear of the natural size, when viewed from below: and if this rule was followed in Babylon, the tower must have been of about the height of five hundred feet; for the statue itself, in order to be viewed from a convenient station, clear of the base, and admitting the retreats of the stories to be regular, must have been from six hundred to six hundred and fifty feet: and at that distance, a statue of forty feet high would have appeared nearly of the size of a man.

That it was exceeding lofty, may be conceived by the mode of expression of those who describe it; and if it be admitted that the whole fabric was a stadium in height, as Strabo says, and as appears probable, even this measure, which is about five hundred feet, must be allowed to be a vast height for so bulky a structure raised by the hands of man; for it is about twenty feet higher than the great pyramid of

Memphis; and would exceed the loftiest pile in Great Britain (Salisbury steeple) by one hundred feet. But as the base of the great pyramid is about seven hundred feet square, or nearly half as large again as that of the tower of Belus, the solid contents of the pyramid must have been much greater. The Greeks with Alexander, who saw and described the tower, had also seen the pyramids; but they make no comparison between either their bulk or their altitudes. The tower, from its having a narrower base, would *appear* much more than twenty feet higher than the pyramid. The space occupied by the mass of ruins taken for the tower of Belus, appears, as far as can be judged, to agree with the idea that may be collected from the descriptions of it; considering that, as so great a portion of it was formed of earth, very much of the mass must have been washed down by the rain; which, according to Della Valle and Beauchamp, has worn deep ravines in its sides. Much also, must

have been dispersed, in dry seasons, by the winds.

With respect to the form of the tower—some have surmised, that the winding path on the outside gave occasion to the report of eight towers placed one above the other: but had it derived its character from this circumstance alone, it would have had a very different appearance from that of a regular pyramidal form, as is described by Strabo: although a winding path might have been so contrived, as to preserve the regularity of the figure. Authors differ also, in respect to the manner in which the tower was completed at the top. Herodotus says, that it terminated in a spacious dome, in the nature of a chapel or temple; but others say, an observatory. Diodorus asserts, that the statue of Belus was at the top: Herodotus, lower down the building. Who shall decide? Xerxes is said to have removed the statues; so that, of course, Herodotus could not have seen them.

There can be but little doubt, that the base has been increased by the falling ruins; although it may be supposed, that such parts of them as consisted of burnt bricks have been removed, as most of the other ruins of the same kind have been, and as even the foundations of the city walls, and of other structures in Babylon, continue to be to this day; and that for the purpose of building houses in other places. At all events, the base of the ruin must far exceed that of the original fabric: and by the way, we may conclude, that, if the Greeks found the tower of Belus, when in such a state, as that the dimensions of its base could be ascertained—a stadium in length and breadth—the standard of the stadium must have been nearer 500 than 600 feet.

Indeed it can hardly be supposed, even when the furnace-baked bricks of the ruin were removed, that the remaining matter would form a mass of less than 600 feet on each side; supposing it to have been 500 originally. It may be inferred, that the upper-

most stories consisted more of masonry than earth; but the lower, chiefly of earth, which was retained in its place, by a vast wall of sun-dried bricks; the outer part, or facing of which, was composed of such as had undergone the operation of fire. Strabo says, that the sides of the tower were of *burnt* bricks.

The *hanging gardens*, (as they are called,) which occupied an area of about three acres and a half, had trees of a considerable size growing in them: and it is not improbable that they were of a species different from those of the natural growth of the alluvial soil of Babylonia. Curtius says, that some of them were eight cubits in girth; and Strabo, that there was a contrivance to prevent the large roots from destroying the superstructure, by building vast hollow piers, which were filled with earth to receive them.

It may reasonably be concluded, that very great changes have taken place in the course of the river, since the date of the descriptions of Babylon, by the early Greek authors.

No doubt the temple of Belus was farther from the river at that time, than accord with the descriptions of the moderns (taking the mount of ruins, Mujellibah, for the tower); so that the river ran more to the west.

M. D'Anville informs us, in his *Euphrates and Tigris*, pages 116, 117, that he had seen a MS. relation of the travels of the missionary, Père Emanuel de St. Albert, which the author had communicated to M. Bellet, at Constantinople; and which the latter had sent to D'Anville's great patron, the Duke of Orleans. In it, the author says, "that he had seen in the *western* quarter of Babylon (the other quarter he did not visit,) extensive ranges of walls, partly standing, partly fallen, and of so solid a construction, that it was scarcely possible to detach the bricks from them. The Jews, settled in those parts, call these remains the prison of Nebuchadnezzar." M. Niebuhr visited a ruin on the west side of the Euphrates; but from the brevity of Père Emanuel's description, we cannot *determine*, abso-

lutely, whether the ruins seen by these two gentlemen were one and the same, but we should certainly conclude the contrary : for what Niebuhr saw, was, in his idea, rather a vast heap of bricks than a structure ; having above, or rising out of it, a tower of furnace-baked brick of great thickness. Nothing is said concerning the nature of the cement ; nor any *reeds* mentioned, either by Père Emanuel, or M. Niebuhr.

As we do not hear of any remains of the *superstructure* of the walls of Babylon, at this time, it may be concluded that the materials of them have been generally removed, to build other places. But this was not done in *very early* times ; for although the city declined soon after the foundation of Seleucia, and was deserted in the time of Pliny, yet it appears that the city walls, as well as the tower of Belus, remained, although not entire. We learn both from Niebuhr and Beauchamp, that the foundations of buildings, and apparently of the walls of the city, also, continue to be dug

up, and transported to other places, for the purposes of building. The bricks are to be traced amongst the buildings of Bagdad and other cities ; as we find Roman bricks in and about those towns that were formerly Roman stations in this Island.

Those who have made it their business to examine and inquire into such matters, have always found that the materials of ancient cities have been employed in the building of new ones, in cases where new foundations have been established in the same neighbourhood ; and when such materials could conveniently be transported by inland navigation, they are found at very great distances from their ancient situation : much farther, indeed, than Bagdad or Seleucia are from Babylon. In effect, the remains of ancient cities throughout the world, are those only, which are either too firmly cemented to be worth the labour of separating ; too far distant from a convenient situation, to be worth the expense of transportation ; or which, from their nature, are not applicable to

ordinary purposes. For a deserted city is nothing else than a *quarry above ground*, in which the materials are ready shaped to every one's hands. And although, during the times of regular government, these ruins may become private property, or the property of the state, yet in the history of every country, there have been intervals of anarchy and confusion, during which such ruins have been regarded as common to all.

We may safely conclude that Babylon stood in the place assigned to it. Many circumstances concur to prove this: for the distances given by Herodotus from *Is*, or *Hit*; and by Strabo, and the Theodosian tables, from Seleucia; the traditions of the Orientals concerning it; their reports of its latitude, and the name of the district round it, which is BABEL to this day; together with the ruins, which are of no ordinary kind; all conspire to place the site of ancient Babylon at and about the present town of Hillah: and the particular ruin which may be taken for that of the tower of

Belus, (which was said to stand in the centre of one of the divisions,) at three and a half British miles to the N.N.W. of Hillah.*

*** See Rennell's Geography of Herodotus, section xiv.—A learned and invaluable work, to whose pages all will be delighted to recur.**

CHAPTER VIII.

Departure for Babylon.—El Mujellibah.—Curious tradition.—Description of this Ruin.—Mode of Brick-making.—Excavations.—Superstition of the Natives.—Prophecies of Jeremiah.—Village of Elugo.—Remarkable Niche.—Discoveries of Mr. Rich.—Large earthen Sarcophagus.—Grandeur of the Ruins.—Extensive embankment.—Lofty elliptical Mound.—Al Kasr, or the Palace.—Numerous Ravines.—Square piers, or buttresses.—Inscriptions.—Supposed site of the Pensile Gardens.—Granite Slab.—The Pensiles Horti.

NOVEMBER 30th.—At daylight I departed for the ruins, with a mind absorbed by the objects which I had seen yesterday.* An hour's walk, indulged in intense reflection, brought me to the grandest and most gigantic Northern mass, on the eastern bank of the Eu-

* See Appendix, Q

phrates, and distant about four miles and a half from the eastern suburb of Hillah. It is called by the natives, El Mujellibah, "the overturned:" also Haroot and Maroot, from a tradition handed down, with little deviation, from time immemorial, that near the foot of the ruin there is a well invisible to mortals, in which those rebellious angels were condemned by God to be hung with their heels upwards, until the day of judgment, as a punishment for their wickedness.*

This solid mound, which I consider from its situation and magnitude to be the remains of the Tower of Babel, an opinion likewise adopted by that venerable and highly distinguished geographer Major Rennell, is a vast oblong square, composed of kiln-burnt and sun-dried bricks, rising irregularly to the height of one hundred and thirty-nine feet, at the south-west; whence it slopes towards the north-east to a depth of a hundred and ten

* See D'Herbelôt, and Appendix, page 257.

feet. Its sides face the four cardinal points: I measured them carefully; and the following is the full extent of each face. That to the north, along the visible face, is 274 yards; to the south, 256 yards; to the east, 226 yards; and to the west, 240 yards.* The summit is an uneven flat strewn with broken and unbroken bricks, the perfect ones measuring thirteen inches square, by three thick. Many

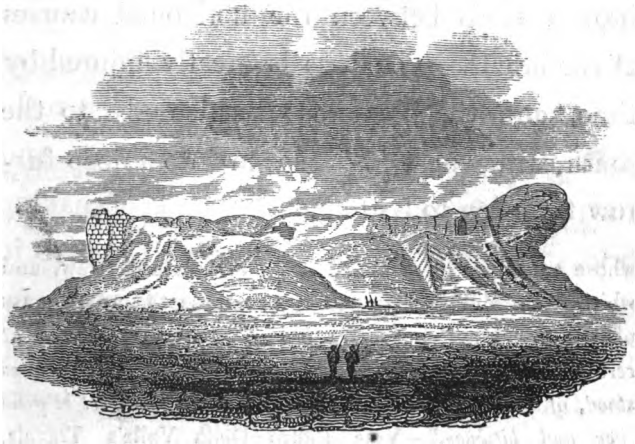
* Pliny, in describing Mesopotamia, says, “*Babylon Chaldaiarum gentium caput diu summam claritatem obtinuit in toto orbe, propter quam reliqua pars Mesopotamiæ Assyriæque Babylonia appellata est, sexaginta millia passuum amplexa, muris ducenos pedes altis, quinquagenos latis, in singulos pedes ternis digitis mensurâ ampliore quàm nostra, interfluo Euphrate, mirabili opere utroque. Durat adhuc ibi Jovis Beli templum. Inventor hic fuit sideralis scientiæ. Cetero ad solitudinem rediit, exhausta vicinitate Seleuciæ, ob id conditæ a Nicatore intra nonagesimum lapidem, in confluyente Euphratis fossa perducti, atque Tigris; quæ tamen Babylonia cognominatur, libera hodie ac sui juris, Macedo. numque moris. Ferunt ei plebis urbanæ DC. M. esse: situm vero mœnium, aquilæ pendentis alas; agrum totius Orientis fertilissimum. Invicem ad hanc exhauriendam, Ctesiphontem juxta tertium ab ea lapidem in Chalonitide condidere Parthi, quod nunc caput est regnorum. Et postquam nihil proficiebatur, nuper Vologesus rex aliud oppidum Vologeso—certam in vicino condidit.*”

exhibited the arrow-headed character, which appeared remarkably fresh. Pottery, bitumen, vitrified and petrified brick, shells and glass, were all equally abundant. The principal materials composing this ruin are doubtless mud bricks baked in the sun, and mixed up with straw. Many of the ancient ruined cities of Persia are likewise described as being built of unburnt bricks beaten up with straw or rush, perhaps to make the ingredient adhere, and then baked in the sun.* This mode of making bricks is of the greatest antiquity ; for even in the days of the Egyptian bondage, I apprehend it to be alluded to, when Pharaoh commanded the taskmasters of the people and their officers, saying, “ Ye shall no more give the people straw to make brick, as heretofore; let them go and gather straw for themselves.”—*Exodus*, chap. v. ver. 7.

It is not difficult to trace brickwork along each front, particularly at the south-west angle,

* Vide Morier's Second Journey through Persia, cap. xiii. page 207.

which is faced by a wall, composed partly of kiln-burnt brick, that in shape exactly resembles a watch tower or small turret.* On its summit there are still considerable traces of erect building: at the western end is a circular



South face of the Mujellibah.

* Pietro Della Valle, a Roman traveller, visited Babylon in 1616. He says, when speaking of this ruin, "Its situation and form correspond with that pyramid which Strabo calls the Tower of Belus."—"It is built with large and thick bricks, as I carefully observed, having caused excavations to be made in several places for that purpose; but they do not appear to have been burned, but dried in the sun, which is extremely hot in those parts. These sun-baked bricks, in

mass of solid brickwork, sloping towards the top and rising from a confused heap of rubbish. The chief material forming this fabric appeared similar to that composing the ruin called Akerkouff—a mixture of chopped straw, with slime used as cement;* and regular layers of unbroken reeds between the horizontal courses of the bricks. The base is greatly injured by time, and the elements; particularly to the south-east, where it is cloven into a deep furrow from top to bottom.

whose substance were mixed bruised reeds and straw, and which were laid in clay mortar, compose the great mass of the building; but *other bricks were also perceived at certain intervals, especially where the strongest buttresses stood, of the same size, but burned in a kiln, and set in good lime and bitumen.*—Vide Pietro Della Valle's Travels, vol. ii. let. 17.

* “And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar.” *Genesis*, chap. i. v. 4.—The cement, here mentioned by the name of slime, was probably what the ancients called *asphaltus*, or bitumen; Assyria abounds with it. Herodotus, and many ancient authors affirm, that the walls of Babylon were cemented with it. Arrian says, “The temple of Belus, in the *midst* of the city of Babylon, was made of brick, cemented with asphaltus.”

The sides of the ruin exhibit hollows worn partly by the weather, but more generally formed by the Arabs, who are incessantly digging for bricks, and hunting for antiquities. Several of these excavations I entered, and have no reason to suppose that they are inhabited by such ferocious animals as the generality of travellers assert. There certainly was an offensive smell, and the caves were strewn with bones of sheep and goats, devoured most probably by the jackals that resort thither in great numbers; and thousands of bats and owls have filled many of these cavities*.

The natives are very reluctant to follow the visitor into these dens, and dislike remaining

* "Because of the wrath of the Lord, it shall not be inhabited, but it shall be wholly desolate; every one that goeth by Babylon shall be astonished, and hiss at all her plagues. How is Babylon become a desolation among the nations! The wild beasts of the desert, with the wild beasts of the islands, shall dwell there, *and the owls shall dwell therein*; and it shall be no more inhabited for ever; neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation. As God

near the ruins after sunset, rather from the fear of demons and evil spirits, than from any attack of lions or other wild beasts. Indeed, by their account, there are not half a dozen lions within thirty miles round Babel; though, about sixty miles below Hillah, on the banks of the river, in a considerable patch of brushwood, those animals are very numerous. It appears, that the only risk attendant on entering the recesses in all the mounds, is the liability of being stung by venomous reptiles, which are very numerous throughout the ruins. This circumstance is an apt illustration of the prophecies of Jeremiah. "And Babylon shall become heaps, a dwelling-place for dragons, an astonishment, and an hissing, without an inhabitant."—*Jeremiah*, chap. li. ver. 37.

Rauwolff, a German traveller, passed these ruins in 1574. He speaks of a village which

overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and the neighbour cities thereof, saith the Lord; so shall no man abide there, neither shall any son of man dwell therein."—*Jeremiah*, chap. l. ver. 13. 23. 39, 40.

he named Elugo, occupying a part of Babylon. This village, I imagine, may have been the town of Nil, marked down in my plan of the ruins. I shall here quote a part of his description ; it is as follows :—" The village of Elugo now lieth on the place where formerly old Babylon, the metropolis of Chaldæa, was situated. The harbour is a quarter of a league's distance from it, where people go ashore in order to proceed by land to the celebrated city of Bagdad, which is a day and a half's journey from thence eastward on the Tigris.

" Just below the village of Elugo is the hill whereon the castle stood, and the ruins of its fortifications are still visible, though demolished and uninhabited. Behind it, and pretty near to it, did stand the Tower of Babylon. It is still to be seen, and is half a league in diameter ; but so ruinous, so low, and so full of venomous creatures, which lodge in holes made by them in the rubbish, that no one durst approach nearer to it than within half a league, except during two months in the

winter, when these animals never stir out of their holes."

In the north-west face of this huge mound is a niche six feet high, by three deep ; it is particularly noticed by Mr. Rich, in his memoir on Babylon ; this recess is very clearly discernible to the distance of full two miles on approaching the ruin from the north ; and it being near the summit renders it a conspicuous spot. The natives call this the *serdaub*, signifying a cellar, or vaulted chamber : this aperture is well worthy the most minute examination, from its being a place of sepulture.

Rich here discovered a wooden coffin, containing a skeleton in high preservation. Under the head of this coffin was a round pebble, attached to the coffin ; on the outside was a brass bird, and inside an ornament of the same material, which had been suspended to some part of the skeleton. This places the antiquity of these remains beyond all dispute ; and Rich adds, that the skeleton of a child was also found.

These circumstances caused me to exert my utmost attention ; and as far as my means went, I set men to work at a distance of twenty yards eastward of the niche.

After four hours' digging perpendicularly from the summit, they discovered six beams of date-tree wood running apparently into the centre of the mound. In half an hour after, I pulled out a large earthen sarcophagus nearly perfect, lined with bitumen, and filled with human bones ; but on attempting to remove it, the vessel broke in pieces. This sarcophagus was larger and broader than any I had ever seen, being upwards of five feet in length, by three and a half in diameter. On the slightest possible touch the bones became a white powder, and the pieces of date-wood could scarcely withstand the same gentle handling without being converted into dust. From digging in an easterly direction, every five or six yards, I verified Mr. Rich's conjecture, that the passage filled with earthen urns extends all along the northern front of the pile ; though I

could find no gallery filled with skeletons enclosed in wooden coffins; nor am I inclined to believe, that any exist in this or any other ruin at Babylon.*

The Mujellibah appeared to me to have an air of ancient grandeur, which, contrasted with the present solitude of the scene, cannot fail to temper the curiosity of the traveller with awe and reverence. On pacing over the loose stones and fragments of brickwork which lay scattered through the immense fabric, and surveying the sublimity of the ruins, I naturally recurred to the time when these walls stood proudly in their original splendour,—when the halls were the scenes of festive magnificence; and when they resounded to the voices of those whom death hath long since swept from the earth.

This very pile was once the seat of luxury and vice; now abandoned to decay, and exhibiting a melancholy instance of the retribu-

* See Rich's second Memoir on the Ruins of Babylon, page 29.

tion of Heaven.* It stands alone : the solitary habitation of the goat-herd marks not the forsaken site ; a projecting embankment surrounds it on the north-eastern and north-western sides ; two small canals enclose the western line, whence the Euphrates is distant a little more than half a mile.

* Babylon never recovered its ancient splendour after it was taken by Cyrus, but, upon the removal of the seat of empire from thence by the Persians, it by degrees decayed, till it was at last reduced to an utter solitude. Berosus, in Josephus, says, that Cyrus ordered the outer walls to be pulled down ; the Persian kings ever regarded Babylon with a jealous eye.

Darius Hystaspes, upon a revolt, greatly depopulated the place, lowered the walls, and demolished the gates ; Xerxes destroyed the temples : the building of Seleucia on the Tigris exhausted Babylon by its neighbourhood, as well as by the immediate loss of inhabitants taken away by Seleucus to people his new city ; a king of the Parthians soon after carried away into slavery a great number, and destroyed the most beautiful parts of the city.

In more modern times, St. Jerome (who lived in the fourth century) mentions Babylon as nothing more than a chase for wild beasts to feed and breed there, for the King of Persia's hunting. The place thereabouts is represented as being overrun with serpents, scorpions, and all sorts of venomous and unclean creatures.—*Bishop Newton on the Prophecies.*

The embankment, which is of great height and breadth, is strewn with vestiges of old building, and embraces a most extensive area; commencing from the north-west of the Mujelibah, passing before its northern and eastern faces; and running due south for a quarter of a mile, where it is crossed by the Nil canal.* It then takes a direction S. 45° E. for two miles, when there is a gap of 305 feet, which forms an angle towards the east: on its southern side the ruined rampart begins again, and runs south-west for a mile and a half, joining a group of low mounds to the south of Amran hill, till it is concealed from view by a date grove extending to the river's bank. The whole forms two sides of a triangle, with its apex opened to the space already mentioned.

Not far from the centre of this great area, formed by the rampart or embankment now traced, stands a lofty elliptical mound, which I suppose to be the remains of the *lesser palace*.

* See Appendix, R.

It extends 325 yards in length, 125 in breadth, and 60 feet in height, and is composed of fragments of bright and red burnt brick; and the Babylonian writing, instead of being on the smooth surface of the brick, appears *along its edge* from three to eight lines; consequently the characters are smaller than the more abundant writing, and are altogether executed with great taste and delicacy. These bricks are very rare, and of great value; which will appear evident when I state that it is almost impossible to procure a perfect specimen from the exhausted state of the ruin.

From this red coloured mass, the Mujellibah bears N. 20° W. Hillah, S. 10° W. and the Birs Nemroud, S. 30° W. This mound rises to the west of an unequal and inferior range of hillocks, and joins another ridge branching off to the southward for the distance of a mile, and something less than half that breadth.*

* As all ancient authors agree in placing the Tower or Temple of Belus "*in the midst of the city*," I leave the reader to judge, whether even this conical mound has not *greater* claims to an identity with the Tower of Babel, than the one

This cluster of hills is of the same height as another range extending along the eastern front of the Kasr, and running due north for one mile; at the same time occupying nearly the whole of the ground from the north face of the Kasr to the river's bank.

Adjoining these heaps, a little to the southward, stands an enormous pile, which the natives have distinguished by the name of Al Kasr, or "The Palace," and which, next to the Mujelibah, is the most attractive and conspicuous object on this side of the river, rearing its rugged head seventy feet above the level of the plain; I feel confident that here lie the *debris* of the great Western palace, for the ground on the eastern face of this ruin is low, soft, and indented, as if the river had wandered from its original course. Its form is very irregular; its length is 820 yards, and its breadth 610. It is deeply furrowed throughout by ravines of great length, depth, and width; and crossing each other in designated *Birs Nemroud*, which I shall presently describe, and which is almost universally considered to be the ruins of that once magnificent structure.

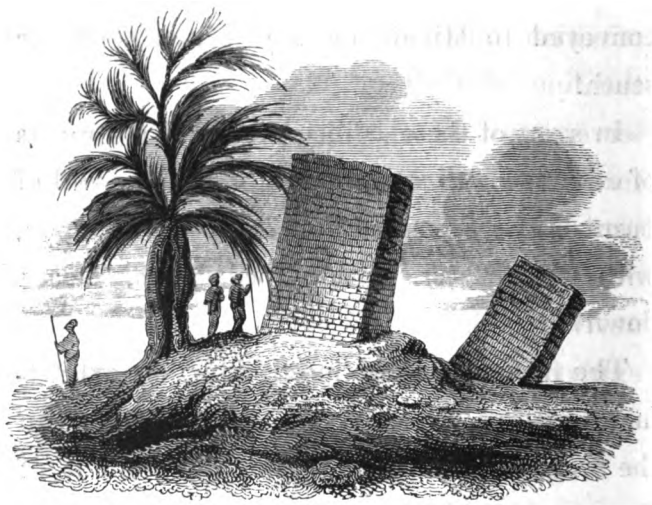
every direction. Some are full sixty feet deep, which may be principally attributed to the Arabs, who were constantly at work to obtain the valuable bricks, which, from the vicinity of the river, are with little trouble and expense conveyed to Hillah, or any towns north or south.

In some of these artificial ravines, fragments of detached wall are still standing, composed of burnt bricks cemented together with bitumen, with their faces, or inscribed parts, placed downwards.

The freshness of the inscriptions, on extracting many of these bricks, was amazing. In the fragments of building on the summit of the mound, neither bitumen nor reeds can be traced, there being but a simple layer of mortar to bind the materials together.

The very heart of this pile appears to be entirely of the finest furnace-baked brick; a fact which strikingly distinguishes it from the Mujelibah, where the sun-dried material is predominant. On the top of this ruin, which is

all that is left us of the greater palace, are the remains of square piers or buttresses, defying the generally destructive power of time. These columns measured from sixteen to eighteen feet



Brick Columns on the Kasr; and at the Atilah.

in height, and nine in thickness. I found it utterly impossible to detach any of the bricks, so firmly did they adhere together. Hence, I imagine that this very circumstance is the cause of their extraordinarily fresh appearance and excellent preservation. Their colour is a pale

yellow, and several of these masses appear to lean from their centre, perhaps from some convulsion of nature.

The cuneiform, or Babylonian inscriptions, are very plainly discernible, after minute examination, on those bricks that project beyond the line of their original position. The observer must kneel down and look upwards; for it is to be remembered, that the inscribed part of every single brick is placed downwards; evidently showing that the writing thereon was never intended to be seen or read; which is an extraordinary circumstance, and not easily accounted for.

It is astonishing that the thinnest layer of cement imaginable should hold the courses of brickwork so firmly and securely together. The natives appear to have entirely discontinued their work of havoc here, from the total impossibility of extracting a perfect brick. There are very conspicuous fragments of detached wall along the western, and a part of the northern face of the Kasr, which (as this part

is the reputed site of the famous Pensile Gardens ascribed to Nebuchadnezzar,) perhaps supported the terraces attached thereto.

Indeed it is easier to trace several long passages among the deep and innumerable ravines, than might be supposed, after the lapse of so many ages; but these fragments of building are daily becoming more hidden from view, and the avenues closed up with broken bricks, rubbish, glazed pottery, and huge masses of stone. I will however particularize a single specimen, in order to give some idea of their gigantic dimensions.

In one of the subterranean passages of a deeply furrowed ravine, I discovered a granite slab fifteen feet long, and five and a half wide; the surface of which exhibited bitumen with an impression of woven matting, or straw, apparently laid on in a perfect unbroken state. This circumstance may, in some degree, identify the site of the *Pensiles Horti*, which, we learn from ancient authors, were raised on pillars by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, to gra-

tify his wife Amyctis, the daughter of Astyages, king of Media.

Quintus Curtius makes them equal in height to the walls of the city, viz. fifty feet. They are said to have contained a square of four hundred feet on each side, and were carried up into the air in several terraces, laid above one another, and the ascent from terrace to terrace was by stairs ten feet wide. The pilasters (no trace of the arch being found throughout the ruins) sustaining the whole pile were raised above one another, and the fabric was strengthened by a wall, surrounding it on every side, of twenty-two feet in thickness.

The floors of each of the terraces were laid in the following manner: on the top of the pillars were first placed *large flat stones, sixteen feet long and four broad; and over them was a layer of reed, mixed with a great quantity of bitumen,* over which were two rows of bricks closely cemented together by plaster, and over all were thick sheets of lead; and, lastly, upon the lead was laid the mould of the garden. The

mould, or earth, was of such a depth, as to admit the largest trees to take root and grow; and it was covered with various kinds of trees, plants, and flowers. In the upper terrace there was an aqueduct or engine, whereby water was drawn up out of the river for watering the garden.

CHAPTER IX.

Curious tree called Athleh.—Sonnini's account of it.—Statue of a Lion.—Remains of buildings.—Square pilaster.—Babylonian writing on the bricks.—Fragment of calcareous sand-stone.—Art of enamelling.—Bricked platform.—Conjecture respecting it.—Discovery of cylinders, gems, coins, &c.—The Khezail tribe.—Banks of the river.—Brazen clamps.—Urns.—Extensive mound.—Village of Jumjuma.—Predictions of Scripture.—The Birs Nemroud.—Vitrified masses of brickwork.

ON the northern front of the Kasrah, or great western Palace, upon an artificial pyramidal height, stands a solitary tree, which the natives of these parts call Athleh.* It appears to be of

* A variety of the *Tamarix Orientalis*.—See Appendix, S. Mr. Rich, oddly enough, calls this tree a *lignum vitæ*.

Sonnini, in his travels in Upper and Lower Egypt, gives a very accurate drawing of this tree, and thus describes it:—

“But a tree which appears to be indigenous in that country is the *atlé*, a species of large tamarisk, (*Tamarix Orientalis*, Forskal, *Flora Egyptiaco-Arabica*, p. 206.—Lin. 13th. edit.) as yet little known. Linnæus has not mentioned

the greatest antiquity, and has been a superb tree ; perhaps a scion of the monarch of the hanging gardens. Its present height is only twenty-

it; and if it is described in the thirteenth edition of his *Systema Naturæ*, in which the author had no hand, it is because Gmelin, the editor, has availed himself of the indication given of it by Forskal.

This *atlé*, which is different from the common tamarisk (*Tamarix Gallica*, L.) by its size, as well as its specific characters, upon which I shall quote a traveller perfectly versed in the science of botany, (*Differt à Tamar. Gallica, cujus rami squamati, squamis alternis, sessilibus lanceolatis; ramuli breves, imbricati: foliis lanceolatis confectis.* Forskal,) attains the height and thickness of the oak. Its leaves are alternate, long, very narrow, and of a pale green. I will not dwell upon its description, having had a drawing made of the trunk and a branch of one of these trees. I regret, that at the time this drawing was made, there were neither flowers nor fruit upon the specimen which the artist had to pourtray.

These trees are, in general, covered with galnuts, adhering to the branches. I have observed that, before they were dried, these galls were filled with a liquor of a very beautiful deep scarlet, from which the arts may perhaps be able to derive considerable benefit; for the galls are exceedingly numerous, and the trees that bear them grow all over both Upper and Lower Egypt. I dwell the more upon this remark, because I have read in a manuscript catalogue of plants, which was in the possession of a companion of M. Tott, that *the atlé is a species of the tamarisk which grows in Upper Egypt, towards Sahil.* Now, there is scarcely a single

three feet; its trunk has been of great circumference: though now rugged and rifled, it still stands proudly up; and, although nearly worn away, has still sufficient strength to bear the burthen of its evergreen branches, which stretch out their arms in the stern grandeur of decaying greatness. The fluttering and rustling sound produced by the wind sweeping through its delicate branches, has an indescribably melancholy effect; and seems as if it were entreating the traveller to remain, and unite in mourning over fallen grandeur.

I scarcely dared ask, why, when standing beneath this precious relic of the past, and prophet of the future, I had nearly lost the power of forcing myself from the spot?

“I turned from all it brought, to those it could not bring.”

village in Lower Egypt, which, among the trees that surround it, has not several *atlés*. The wood of this tree serves for various purposes; amongst others, for charcoal. It is the only wood that is common in Egypt, either for fuel or for manufacturing; indeed, it is a common proverb among the inhabitants, that “were the *atlé* to fail, the world would go ill.”—*Vide Sonnini's Travels in Egypt*, pp. 247, 248. 4to.

Proceeding two hundred and four feet east of the old tree, and on an uneven spot of ground, surrounded by vestiges of buildings, is to be seen, lying on its right side, a lion; beneath him is a prostrate man, extended on a pedestal, which measures nine feet in length, by three in width. The whole is from a block of stone of the ingredient and texture of granite, the scale colossal, and the sculpture in a very barbarous style; much inferior to the Persepolitan specimens of this art.* The head of the lion has been knocked off by the violence of some modern Vandal. When Mr. Rich visited Babylon, this statue was in a perfect state. In his interesting investigations, he remarks of the lion, that "in the mouth was a circular aperture, into which a man might introduce his fist."

From its vicinity to the river, (within five

* The Hon. Major Keppel has inaccurately stated this colossal piece of sculpture to be in *black marble*.—See his *Travels in Assyria*.

hundred yards,) little toil and expense would enable the antiquary to remove it from the mutilation of barbarians; and boats are procurable at Hillah, which would convey it to Bussorah. I trust I shall be believed when I state, that the want of funds was the only reason that prevented my transporting this valuable relic of antiquity to India; where no great expense would attend its embarkation for England.

Beauchamp, in speaking of this ruin, says, "On this side of the river are those immense ruins which have served, and still serve, for the building of Hillah, an Arabian city, containing ten or twelve thousands souls. Here are found those large and thick bricks, imprinted with unknown characters, specimens of which I have presented to the Abbé Barthélemy. This heap, and the Mount of Babel, are commonly called by the Arabs, *Makloubah*, that is to say, *turned topsy-turvy*. I was informed by the master-mason employed to

dig for bricks, that the places from which he procured them were large thick walls, and sometimes chambers. He has frequently found earthen vessels, engraved marbles, and, about eight years ago, a statue as large as life, which he threw among the rubbish. On one wall of a chamber he found the figures of a cow, and of the sun and moon, formed of varnished bricks. Sometimes idols of clay are found, representing human figures." *Vide Beauchamp's authority, quoted by Major Rennell in his invaluable Illustrations of the Geography of Herodotus.*

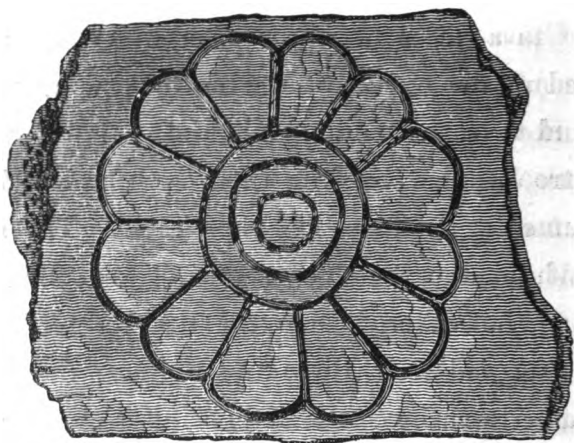
Eighty yards to the west of the fallen statue, a vast quantity of perfect building is observable in detached fragments of architectural labour; and some pieces of square pillars or columns cover the surface of this elevated terrace. The whole is of the finest furnace brick. On a high spot, about fifty-five feet above the level of the plain, I distinctly traced a large square pilaster rising out of a conical mound. The bricks which composed it measured thirteen inches

square, by three thick, and were joined together with an almost imperceptible layer of cement.

I employed thirty men to clear away the rubbish, and we dug down along its western face to a depth of twenty feet, when we arrived at the bricks, where bitumen alone was found to be the binding material. Here I had no trouble of extracting them with an iron instrument something like a pick-axe. The arrow-headed or cuneiform writing was stamped on all, but differed as to the number of lines. They varied from three to ten lines; the first number was the commonest, or most abundant, and the latter the most rare.

The writing was more deeply engraven on these bricks than on any others I had met with. I found one with the Babylonian writing both on its *face* and *edge*, but unfortunately it was broken. I regard it as a unique specimen; never having seen or heard of another like it. I discovered also an ornamental flat fragment

of calcareous sand-stone, glazed with brown enamel on the superior surface, and bearing the raised figure in good relief represented in the accompanying woodcut.



Fragment found at Babylon.

This proves that the Babylonians had perfectly acquired the art of *enamelling*. Diodorus Siculus informs us, that among the great variety of painting represented upon the walls of the palace, Semiramis was seen on horseback, piercing with her dart a panther; and her husband Ninus, in the act of fixing to the earth

with his spear a savage lion.* M. Beauchamp found several varnished bricks, on one of which was the figure of a lion, and on another the sun and moon. He likewise saw imperfectly the colossal lion already noticed.

Upon clearing away a space of twelve feet square at the base of the pilaster, I laid open a bricked platform beautifully fastened together with bitumen, each brick measuring *nineteen inches and three quarters square*, by three and a half thick, with the written characters along the *edge*, instead of being in an upright column on the face. I will venture to assert, that these bricks are the largest hitherto found; as all former visitors and writers on this venerable place agree in saying, that the largest bricks measure only fourteen inches square. I

* Diod. Sic. lib. ii. p. 97. The prophet Ezekiel, in denouncing the vengeance of Heaven upon Judah, says, "She saw men *pourtrayed upon the wall, the images of the Chaldeans pourtrayed with vermilion*, girded with girdles upon their loins, exceeding in dyed attire upon their heads, all of them princes to look to, after the manner of the Babylonians of Chaldea."—Ezekiel xxiii. ver. 14, 15.

have removed two of these immense bricks to Bussorah, one of which has since been presented to Sir John Malcolm, Governor of Bombay.

The platform, I have no doubt, extended for a considerable space; and it is not improbable that it was the flooring of some chamber, or serdaub; perhaps a terrace attached to the Pensile Gardens; for, deducting the twenty feet of perpendicular digging, it is still greatly raised above the general level. In making a very careful and fatiguing search throughout the accumulated earth, which we removed from this fine platform, my labours were amply compensated by the discovery of four cylinders, three engraved gems, one of which is represented in the frontispiece to this volume; and several silver and copper coins; which at first appeared like so many black stones, so thickly were they incrustated with verdigris. On cleansing one of the copper coins, I found it to be of Alexander the Great. The others were of the Syrian, Parthian, Roman,

and Kufic dynasties, in the best state of preservation.

The cylinders are of hæmatite, cornelian, opal, jasper, agate, chalcedony, sardonyx, crystal, and bone, and are generally found by the Khezail Arabs among a considerable group of mounds, called Boursa,* about ten miles to the south of Hillah, close to a village termed by them Jerboueyah.

My friend John Robert Steuart, Esq. possesses a very extensive and valuable collection of these antiquities, and has devoted much time to the study of these hieroglyphics. He imagines that the figures carved upon the longitudinally-perforated cylinders, denote imitations of groups which were represented upon the walls of the Temple of Belus, or of the various deities worshipped by the Babylonians; and likewise sacrifices to them. Mr. Landseer has published an interesting work, entitled "Sabæan Researches," in which he discusses

* See Note on Babylon, page 255.

the objects of these representations at great length, referring them to planetary and astronomical combinations, or calculations of nativities, &c.

The powerful and warlike Khezail tribe inhabit the banks as far as the large village of Semavah, on the Euphrates, where the women are proverbial throughout the country for beauty of feature, and perfect symmetry of form. The highly interesting spot where I laid open the platform, is one thousand two hundred and fifty feet from the bank of the river; a little to the north, and upon the bank, is an enclosure of date-trees, and among them some attempts at cultivation, of a parched and sickly appearance.

The stream continues in view meandering for a considerable distance, surrounded by objects well calculated to heighten the solemn impression of the scene of the principal ruins. Here, along the banks, are several osiers, perhaps the very willows upon which the daugh-

ters of Israel hung their harps and wept. "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion: we hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof." *Psalm cxxxvii.* ver. 1, 2. This is the woful lamentation of one of the Jewish captives of Babylon, either at the time of their captivity, or at their return from it. It contains a mournful reflection on their banishment from their native country, combined with the insolent behaviour of their enemies; and foretells the future destruction which awaited the city of Babylon and its devoted inhabitants. As I strolled along the banks of the river, the exquisitely beautiful and sweetly-pathetic stanzas of Lord Byron, in his Hebrew Melodies, on this very subject, forced themselves on my attention—

" We sat down and wept by the waters
Of Babel."

Before I quitted these ruins, I continued along the bank for half a mile, when I came to

the spot where Mr. Rich discovered the urns with human bones. Here it was, after a diligent search of two hours among the fragments of brick and masonry on the water's edge, that I found two large brazen clamps exhibiting these forms.



What they appertained to, I do not pretend to determine; though it is not improbable they belonged to the bridge* which was thrown over the Euphrates; and this spot, from its vicinity to the reputed site of the Palace, and the famous Hanging-gardens, may perhaps accord with the generally-received accounts of its position. The traveller Rauwolff, who approached these ruins by water, notices the remains of an ancient brick bridge here

* "She (Nitocris) afterwards, nearly in the centre of the city, with the stones above-mentioned, strongly compacted with iron and lead, erected a bridge," &c.—*Herodotus, Chio.* clxxxvi.

alluded to. He says:—"This country is so dry and barren, that it cannot be tilled; and so bare, that I should have much doubted whether this potent and powerful city (which once was the most stately and famous one of the world, situated in the pleasant and fruitful country of Sinar,) did stand there, if I should not have known it by its situation, and several ancient and delicate antiquities that still are standing hereabouts in great desolation. First, by the old bridge, which was laid over the Euphrates, (which also is called Sud by the prophet Baruch in his first chapter,) whereof there are some pieces and arches still remaining, and to be seen at this very day, a little above where we landed. These arches are built of burnt brick, and so strong, that it is admirable, and that so much the more, because all along the river as we came from Bir, where the river is a great deal smaller, we saw never a bridge; wherefore I say it is admirable which way they could build a bridge here, where the river is at least half a league broad, and very

deep besides.”—pp. 137, 138. A correct idea of the bank filled with urns, and of Amran hill behind it, may be formed on reference to the accompanying engraving.

Vast quantities of various-coloured tile and brick were here lying upon the bed of the river, which appears to be gradually encroaching, the bank being perpendicular, and greatly injured by the action of the water. I extracted large portions of highly-polished vases from this bank, to all of which adhered human bones, which on attempting to separate from the urn, became immediately pulverised.

From the south-western face of the palace, or Kasr, a long mound ninety yards in breadth by half that height runs north and south; to the north-west angle of Amran hill, so called by Mr. Rich. The superficies of the intervening ground is covered with long reeds,* and the

* The reeds we now see growing in many parts of the ruins, are particularly noticed in Scripture; indeed, they are said to have been so high, together with the mud on which they stood, as to have formed, as it were, another wall round the city.

soil is peculiarly damp, as if it had been overflowed, here and there exhibiting a very swampy and nitrous appearance. In fact, here are very evident traces of the Euphrates having altered its course; and if we admit this, the breadth of the river (from the appearance of its ancient bed) was 160 yards. Major Rennell is unquestionably correct in pronouncing this "the deserted bed of the river Euphrates." It is indeed surprising that the idea did not immediately occur to Mr. Rich. The great mass of this latter heap occupies more ground than the Kasr, and has evidently formed an immense range of building; it would be rather more elevated, were the standing pilasters on the palace removed. It forms a triangle: its northern front extends 860 yards; its southern, 1420.

The whole is deeply furrowed in the same manner as the generality of the mounds. The ground is extremely soft and tiresome to walk over, and appears completely exhausted of all its building materials; nothing now is left save one towering hill, the earth of which is mixed with

fragments of broken brick, red varnished pottery, tile, bitumen, mortar, glass, shells, and pieces of mother-of-pearl.

To the south-west of the mound, a tomb in good repair contains the bones of Amran, who, the natives say, was a son of Ali. The keeper of this tomb may be likened to Job's forsaken man, dwelling in desolate cities, and in houses which no man inhabiteth, which are ready to become heaps (chap. xv. ver. 28.): and a hundred yards to the E. S. E. of this building there is a solid block of white marble, measuring six feet long, three wide, and three and a half inches thick; but no writing, device, or bitumen, is to be traced upon it.

To the westward of this, the ground is flat, without any marks of building, and is bounded by the river's embankment (already noticed) on its opposite side, where Rich found a number of urns filled with human bones which had undergone the action of fire.*

* Note on Urns from Desatir, page 248.

A little below this there is a ridge of mounds extending from a date-grove on the verge of the stream, to the south-west of a village called Jum-juma, which appellative means a skull, and likewise according to Castell and Golius, "*Puteus in loco salsuginoso fossus.*" The mounds then stretch towards the remains of a tomb of the same name, form a right angle behind it, taking an easterly course, where they are traversed by the Bagdad road.

I had been walking a full hour by the light of the rising moon, and could not persuade my guides to remain longer, from the apprehension of evil spirits. It is impossible to eradicate this idea from the minds of these people, who are very deeply imbued with superstition.

I have now concluded my description of the ruins on the east side of the Euphrates, within the probable bounds of Babylon. It will be seen how exactly the divine predictions have been fulfilled. In the language of Scripture, she is truly "wasted with misery, her habita-

tions are not to be found ; and for herself, the worm is spread over her."

DECEMBER 3d.—Attended by three horsemen from the commander of the Pasha of Bagdad's army encamped near Hillah, in addition to my own people, I set out for the western shore of the river, and for the purpose of examining the most remarkable of all the Babylonian remains, which the Turks, Arabs, and Jews name Birs* Nemroud, meaning the Tower or *Akron* of Nimrod.

The indefatigable Niebuhr conceived it to be the Tower of Babel, or Temple of Belus ; a supposition which has been supported by Rich, and nearly all succeeding travellers : some of whom, in describing this ruin, assert that it is called by the Jews *Nebuchadnezzar's Prison*.† I can only say, that at the present moment it is

* See Appendix, T. p. 258.

† In an Itinerary written nearly 700 years ago by Benjamin of Tudela, a Jew who lived in the twelfth century, it is said, that " Ancient Babylon is now laid waste, but some ruins are still to be seen of Nebuchadnezzar's Palace ; and men fear to enter there, on account of the serpents and

known by one name alone—Birs Nemroud, or Nimrod.*

We proceeded over a plain covered with nitre, at intervals crossing some dry canal beds, and small pools of water, and starting large flocks of bitterns. This put me in mind of the following passage in Isaiah.—“I will also make it a possession for the bittern, and pools of

scorpions which are in the midst of it.” Many writers imagine the Birs is the ruin spoken of by the Jew; but as it is so far from the river, and some danger to be apprehended by visiting it, I think it more probable the Mujellibah is here alluded to.

Mr. Rich, and, I may add, all those travellers who have more recently visited and described the Birs Nemroud, appear to identify it with the Tower, because it more nearly resembles the state of decay into which we might suppose that edifice to have fallen, after the lapse of ages, than any other remain within the circumference of Babylon. This mode of judging from *appearances* cannot be admitted, nor that slender hypothesis of Sir Robert Ker Porter, when describing the Mujellibah. It runs thus:—“From the *general appearance* of this piece of ruin, I scarcely think that its solid elevation has ever been much higher than it stands at present.” The reader will bear in mind, that the base of this mound extends 822 feet in length, while its height is only 139. He will, I think, see the futility of Sir Robert’s remark.

* Appendix, V. p. 259.

water, and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction.”*

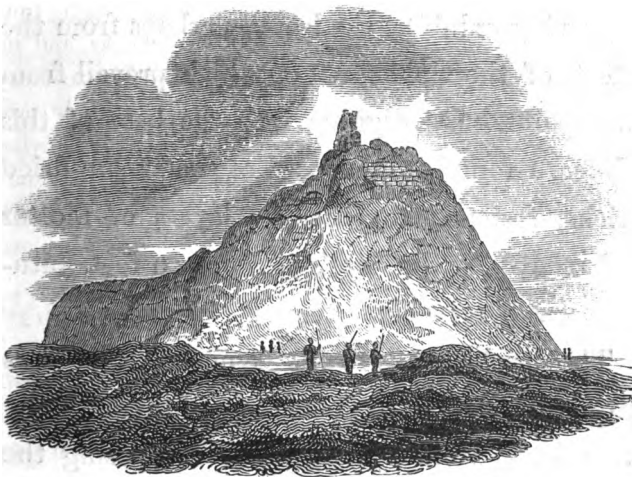
A walk of two hours and a quarter in a S.W. direction brought me to the base of its eastern front. It lies five miles distant from the western suburb of Hillah. On my first beholding this “mountainous” mass† it bore a little to the westward of south, appearing like an oblong

* Isaiah, chap. xiv. ver. 23.—“Cyrus took the city of Babylon in the year 539 before Christ, by diverting the waters of the Euphrates, which ran through the midst of it, and entering the place at night by the channel. It was two furlongs wide; but he had made it fordable by means of the lake and trenches which he had prepared. The river being thus turned, by the breaking down of dams and banks, and no care taken afterwards to repair the breach, all the country was overflowed and drowned, and ultimately a whole province lost. Alexander, who intended to have made Babylon the seat of his empire, set about remedying the mischief; but difficulties arising, he soon after dying, and the work being never more thought of, that country has remained bog and marsh ever since.”—*Dean Prideaux*.

† “Though Babylon was seated in a low watery plain, yet it is in Jeremiah (chap. li. ver. 25.) called a “mountain,” on account of its power and greatness, as well as of the vast height of its walls and towers, its palaces and temples; and Berosus, ‡ speaking of some of its buildings, says, that they appeared most like mountains.”—*Newton on the Prophecies*.

‡ την οψιν αποδερ ὁμοιοτατην τοις ορεσι—quibus speciem dedit montibus persimilem.—*Joseph. Antiq. lib. x.*

hill, surmounted by a tower. The total circumference of its base is exactly seven hundred and twenty-two yards. Its eastern face extends one hundred and sixty-eight yards in width, and only two stages of a hill are distinctly observable. The first measures in height seventy feet, whence the second sweeps irregularly upwards, to the height of one hundred and twenty feet, crowned by the ruin of a turret. This is a solid mass of the finest kiln-burnt masonry, the circumference of which



Western face of the Birs Nemroud.

is ninety feet, viz. that face looking towards the south, twenty-seven feet; to the east, thirty; to the west, twenty-four; and to the north, nine. It is one hundred and ninety feet from the foundation of the pile to the base of the tower; and from the basement of the tower to its uneven summit, thirty-five. This measurement is taken at the western face, where the tower assumes a pyramidal form towards the top; whence it is rifted or split half-way down its centre. The southern face of the mound is the most perfect; and the western, which the foregoing engraving exhibits, the least; perhaps from the effects of the violent winds which prevail from that point. On digging into the base of this edifice, I found it composed of coarse sun-dried bricks, fastened together by layers of mortar and reed. At the depth of fourteen feet, bitumen was observable.

The bricks are so firmly cemented, that it is utterly impossible to detach any of them. They are a little thinner than those composing the ruins on the eastern bank of the river; and I

could not, from their firm position, ascertain whether they had any inscription, though, from the written fragments lying about, I have no doubt they all bear the Babylonian character on their lower faces.

This tower-like ruin is pierced throughout with small square apertures, probably to preserve the fabric from the influence of damp; and instead of bitumen, a very thin layer of lime is spread between every single brick. On the summit of the pile, at the foot of the standing brickwork composing the tower, and on the north and western faces, are several immense brown and black masses of brickwork, more or less changed into a vitrified state, looking at a distance like so many edifices torn up from their foundations, being generally of an irregular form, and some resting on mere pivots.



Vitrified Mass of Brick-work at the Birs.

Previous to examination, I took them for masses of black rock : some of these huge fragments measured twelve feet in height, by twenty-four in circumference, and from the circumstance of the standing brickwork having remained in a perfect state, the change exhibited in these is only accountable from their having been exposed to the fiercest fire, or rather *scathed by lightning*.*

* “ The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken, and her high gates shall be burnt with fire.”—*Jer.* ch. li. v. 58.

A little below these vitrified masses, on the north-west face of the ruin, fine brickwork is distinctly visible, each brick measuring one foot square, by four inches thick. There are also small square holes running deep into the pile, and in some places the bricks are greatly injured by exposure.

Still descending, there is a larger ruin of this kind of wall, which assumes an angular form. The bricks here are thirteen inches long, by four and one quarter thick, and are cemented together with a coarse layer of lime upwards of an inch deep, with an *impression only* of matting or straw. They are not level, but slope gently from the north face towards the east, and from the east face towards the south—a curious circumstance. Below this is a large square deep hole, through which the materials of the structure are very discernible, consisting principally of sun-dried bricks of similar dimensions as the kiln-baked.

These appear cemented together by mortar and bruised reeds, or chopped straw, an

inch in thickness, and through this mass holes measuring two feet in height, by one in width, appear to penetrate to the heart of the building.

Bitumen, which is found at the base of most of the ruined structures, is likewise discernible in this pile. None is to be found in the upper portion. This, it must be remarked, confirms the following passage of Herodotus,—“*δια τριηκοντα δομων πλινθου,*” &c.

The whole summit and sides of this mountainous ruin are furrowed, by the weather and by human violence, into deep hollows and channels, completely strewn with broken bricks stamped with three, four, six, and seven lines of writing, stones, glass, tile, large cakes of bitumen, and petrified and vitrified substances.

CHAPTER X.

Immense hill.—Koubbé, a Mahometan building.—Excavations made by the Arabs.—Urns, Alabaster Vase, &c.—Custom of Urn-burial.—Tombs described by Captain Basil Hall.—Village of Ananah.—Situation of Babylon.—Pyramidal Ruin, called El Hamir.—Mode of Building.—Characters on the Bricks.—Cylindrical Bricks.—Colossal bronze Figures.—Tomb of Ali Ibn Hassan.—Departure from Hillah.—Predictions of Isaiah.—The Author's arrival at Bagdad.

AN open quadrangular area extends for a considerable distance around the Birs, though its base is encircled by small ridges of mounded earth. I must not, however, pass unnoticed one immense hill scarcely a hundred yards distant from the eastern front of this stupendous fabric. It stretches away north and south to a breadth of 450 yards, when its extreme points

curve and meet to the eastward, after having occupied a space of 650 yards. Its height is fifty-five feet. This mound is also very deeply furrowed into countless channels, covered with nearly the usual *debris* of former building, except that the fragments of vases and glazed pottery are inconceivably fresh and abundant.

On its summit is a Mohammedan building, called Koubbé, generally pronounced *Goubbah*, meaning, in Arabic, a cupola, or dome. It goes by the name of Makam Ibrahim Khalil :* the Arabs say, that Nimrod ordered a fire to be kindled near it, and commanded the prophet Abraham to be cast into it; while that “mighty hunter before the Lord” viewed the frightful exhibition from the summit of his tower †.

The ruined portion of another Koubbé stands a little to the south, called Makam Saheb Ze-

* “ Ibrahim al Nabi et Ibrahim Khalil Allah ; c'est à dire, Abraham le Prophet ou l'ami de Dieu, est le même qu'Abraham le Patriarche, qui est reconnu pour père par les Arabs, aussi bien que par les Juifs.”—*Vide D'Herbelôt*.

† See Appendix. Note V. page 259.

man, to which also several curious traditions are attached. It being a clear day, I was induced to remain till near sunset to see if I could observe the gilt domes of Meshhed Ali, which bears south, and Messhed Hussein north-west, but I was unsuccessful.

At a distance of two hundred and seventy feet from the northern and western faces of the Birs, and on an eminence, there are several deep cavities formed by the Arabs, when digging for hidden treasure. The intervening space has no elevated traces of building (though there are vestiges of pavement and old foundations); but close to these excavations are portions of masonry, composed of furnace-brick, stamped with three lines of cuneiform writing. I directed my attention to the largest excavated spot, and found it ten feet deep by six square. In its sides were bricks irregularly and, apparently, hastily placed; and, on digging along each face, I discovered them to be filled with urns containing ashes *alone*.

On examining one, I picked out an enamelled bead perforated through the centre, and some teeth; the interior portion of which became pulverised on being touched; but the enamel had remained as hard, and the polish in the same beautiful condition, as if it had just belonged to a living being. These urns had no bitumen whatever attached to them, and I found it impossible to extract one in a perfect state; on removing the earth around, they instantly broke to pieces. The fragments of an alabaster vase were lying at the north end of this excavation.

It would appear that urn-burial, so far from being confined to the Greeks and Romans, as supposed to be the case by some authors who have lately written on the sepulchral vases found at Babylon; independently of the proof already afforded in the Appendix,* of the sanction of this practice by the religious institutes of the Desatîr, was venerated by the an-

* See Note G. p. 248.

cient Persians. A similar custom obtains among the idolaters of the Loo-choo Islands, as is evident by the following extract from the interesting volume of Captain Basil Hall.

“ They have large tombs or cemeteries for their dead, being mostly of the Chinese form, viz. that of a horse-shoe. They are formed of stones and mortar, and are covered with a coat of chéenam, (shell lime,) which is always kept nicely whitewashed and clean swept: some are more highly finished than others; their size varies from twenty to thirty feet in length, by twelve to fourteen feet broad. The coffin, when closed, is placed in the vault under the tomb, and is not touched for six or seven years, by which time the flesh is found to have separated and wasted away; the bones are then collected, and put into jars ranged in rows on the inside of the vault. Burning is never used at any stage of the proceedings, nor under any circumstances. In the course of time, when these become crowded, the vases are removed to

houses appropriated to their reception above-ground: such must have been the building described by Mr. Clifford, in the village near Port Melville.

“ The lower orders, who cannot afford these expensive tombs, take advantage of hollow places in the rocks, which, by a little assistance, are made secure vaults. In the cliffs behind the village of Oonting, the galleries cut for the reception of the vases must have been the work of men possessed of power and authority. Not being fully aware what the Chinese customs are with respect to the dead, in ordinary cases, it is impossible for us to say how nearly they resemble those of Loo-choo, but there are certainly some points of resemblance.” *

The whole tract between Hillah and these ruins, appears very marshy, sterile, and sandy. Three lakes, or marshes, are very conspicuous

* See “ Account of a Voyage of Discovery to the west coast of Corea, and the great Loo-choo Island.” Cap. iii. page 204. 4to.

hence, the first bearing S. W. the second W.N.W. and the third, N.N.E.—One of Isaiah's prophecies concerning Babylon, is named "The burden of the desert of the sea," (ch. xxi. v. 1.) for Babylon was seated in a plain, and surrounded by water. The propriety of the expression consists in this, not only that any large collection of waters, in the Oriental style, is called *a sea*, but also that the places about Babylon are said from the beginning to have been called *the sea*. It was a great barren morassy desert originally: such it became after the taking of the city by Cyrus, and such it continues to this day.—*Bishop Newton on the Prophecies*.

Eight or nine miles to the N.N.W. of Birs Nemroud, parallel with the embankment on the eastern bank of the Euphrates, and nearly opposite the Kasr, is a village called Ananah, upon the river's bank; to the north-west a long, low, dark hillock runs apparently north for three hundred and twenty yards, when it turns to the east, and continues in that direc-

tion to the bank of the river, where portions of sun-dried and furnace-baked bricks are plainly discernible.

Near the village of Thamasia, (which name would indicate its foundation by Shah Thamas of the Sefi house,) four miles to the westward of Hillah, and situated within a grove of date-trees, there are several elevated mounds, composed of the kiln-burnt fabric, with the arrow-headed writing upon them, extending nearly to the eastern ridge of low hillocks which surrounds the Birs, and strewed over with pottery, broken bricks and coloured tile, but having no actual remains of ancient edifices. In following these heaps of ruin, I could not at every step help feeling convinced, that ancient Babylon occupied a very great portion of the western as well as the eastern bank of the Euphrates; and admitting this, the Birs Nemroud, by many (in my opinion most inaccurately) supposed to be the Tower of Babel, or Temple of Belus, will not be so far removed from a division of the city as I had at first sup-

posed ; and certainly, from its present situation, I conclude that this grand heap, apparently the remains of a bastion or battlement, erected as a defence to this quarter, stood in the south-west angle of the mighty city on the western side of the river. It does not appear to me at all unaccountable, that as many traces of building should be found on this side of the river as on the other ; because we are expressly told, that Babylon resembled a country walled in, rather than a city ; the walls, according to Herodotus, being sixty miles in circumference, and within this circuit a great portion of ground was cultivated with corn ; in fact, a sufficient quantity to support the inhabitants during a long siege.

I should not omit to state, that there are many urns containing ashes (the bones being in the smallest fragments) in the bank from Ananah to within one hundred and fifty yards of the north end of the town of Hillah, and there are very visible traces of them on the opposite side, and for the same distance. These

are not placed horizontally only, but in every possible position; their dimensions vary in a great degree, while their contents differ very materially from those urns at the Mujellibah, where the bones are in a perfect state.*

I shall conclude with noticing a very remarkable conical ruin peculiarly worthy the attention of the antiquary. It is distant from Hillah eight miles, in a direction E. N. E. and the natives distinguish it by the name of El Hamir.† On reaching the foot of this ruin, I was immediately struck with the great similarity it bore to the Birs; particularly the upper portion or mass of deep red brickwork resembling the breastwork of a fort. Each face of this higher portion is of greater dimensions than the standing turret-like building on the top of the mound of Nemroud, although the proportions of its base are nearly a third less. It is not difficult to derive from this remain of anti-

* See Note on Urns, and the mode of burial, p. 248.

† See Appendix, W. p. 267.

quity, conceptions as grand as those suggested by the view of Birs Nemroud. Its circumference I found to be two hundred and eighty yards, or eight hundred and forty feet. Its height is seventy-five feet.

The foundation is composed of sun-dried brick, which extends half-way up the pile, the remainder being furnace-burnt, of a coarse fabrication. This pyramidal ruin is crowned by a solid mass of masonry, the bricks of which were so soft, that pieces might easily be broken off; but those composing the interior were as firm and hard as at the Kasr, and rather larger. The brickwork on the summit faces the cardinal points, and is much dilapidated. The face fronting the north measures thirty-six feet, the south thirty-seven, the east forty-seven, and the west fifty.

The bricks are cemented together with a thick layer of clay, and between the courses of brickwork, at irregular distances, a layer of white substance is perceptible, varying from

one quarter to an inch in thickness, not unlike burnt gypsum, or the sulphate of lime. From the peculiarly mollified state of the bricks, I apprehend this white powder is nothing more than common earth, which has undergone this change by the influence of the air on the clay composing the bricks.

I have heard it more than once advanced, that the white layers interposed between the bricks in this ruin are merely what remain of the courses of reeds. It however appears to me, that, granting the atmospheric action had reduced their exposed surface to the colour of plaster, yet the peculiar structure of the vegetable substance would have been discernible as long as its component particles held together. In no case did I see this; I conclude, therefore, that these white layers are not the remnants of reeds.

Throughout the ruin, small square apertures, similar to those at Birs Nemroud, are observable; but neither lime nor bitumen can be seen

adhering to the bricks, though large pieces of the latter substance are very abundant at the base of the mound.*

The Babylonian writing on these bricks, which measure fourteen inches long, twelve and a half broad, and two thick, contained ten lines in an upright column, and many stamped across to the angles of the brick; whereas at the Mujellibah, Birs, and Kasr, I only met with three, four, six, seven, and nine lines. It was only at the platform that I found specimens with ten lines, which must certainly be considered rare. These inscriptions appear to have been stamped on the brick while in a soft state, by a block of wood, and in a very great degree resemble the nail-headed writing of Persepolis, though their form and arrangement differ.

In speaking of these most curious antiques, Mr. Rich says, "No idea of the purpose these inscriptions were intended to answer, can be

* See Appendix, X. Note on Babylonian bricks, p. 267.

formed from the situation the bricks are found in, which is such as to preclude the possibility of their being read till after the destruction of the buildings they composed. At the ravine in the mound of the Kasr, I was present at the extracting of above a hundred of them, and found that they were all placed on the layers of cement with their faces or inscribed parts downwards; so that the edges only (which formed the front of the wall) were visible: and from subsequent observation I ascertained this to be the case in every ruin where they are found; a proof that they were designedly placed in that manner.

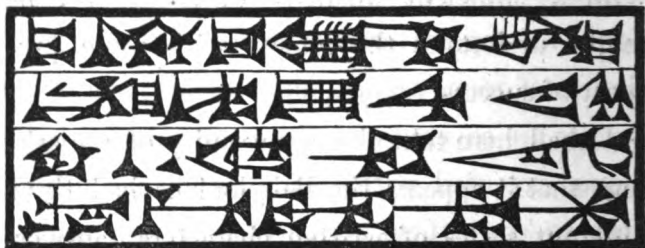
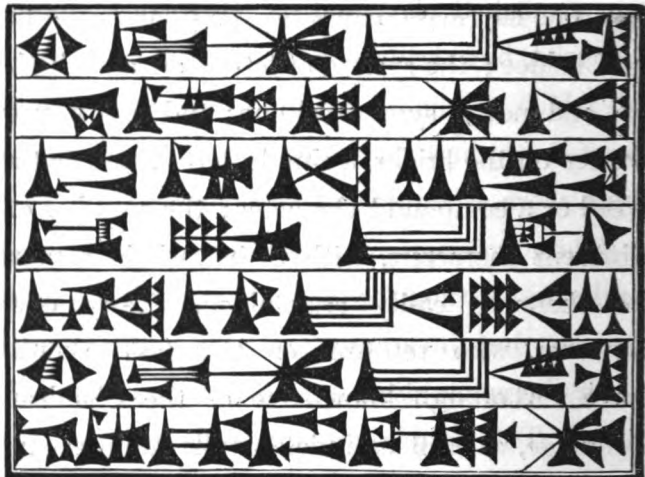
“The prospect,” he continues, “of one day seeing these inscriptions deciphered and explained, is probably not so hopeless as it has been deemed. Leaving the attempt to those who have more leisure, ability, and inclination for such undertakings, than I possess, I shall content myself with suggesting, that from the specimens now before us, some points may be

established, the importance of which those skilled in the art of deciphering will readily acknowledge.

“The language may safely be pronounced to be Chaldee; the system of letters an alphabetical and not a symbolical one; and each figure we see on the bricks, a simple letter, and not a word or a compound character; the number of different characters, with their variations, may be therefore easily ascertained. Any one, however, who ventures on this task, should have a thorough knowledge of the Chaldean language, as well as indefatigable application: aided by these qualifications, and furnished with a sufficient quantity of specimens, he might undertake the labour with some prospect of success.”

I shall here take the opportunity of remarking, that it appears the Babylonians had three different styles of written characters, answering to our large hand, small text, and round hand. The two first are found on the bricks

which measure from twelve to thirteen inches square, by three and a half thick.



The latter style of written characters is seen on other bricks rather less than half that size, on cylindrical *barrels* made of the very finest furnace-baked clay, and on tablets of the same material, but varying in shape and size; some of which, I should imagine, from being perforated through their centre or sides, have been worn as amulets or talismans.

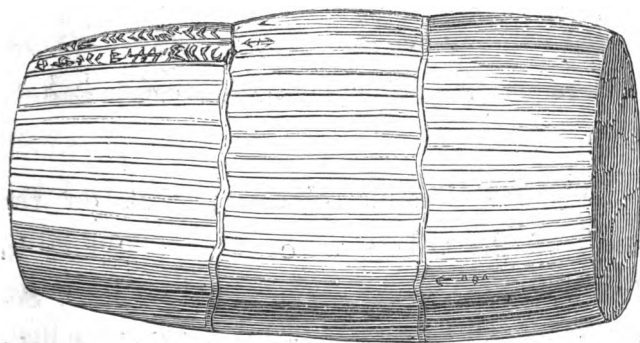
These inscriptions cover the whole surface and sides, without being confined within a margin, as they invariably are on the bricks, and their characters assume a more *cursive* appearance. The barrels are very different from the longitudinally perforated talismanic cylinders; which, in addition to the arrow-headed or cuneiform writing, invariably exhibit mythological figures of men, women, and animals; while the former are covered with the small running-hand alone, executed with such delicacy and nicety, that to copy them correctly is a task almost impracticable.

Of these, only four have (to my knowledge) been hitherto found: two are in the British

Museum, belonging to Mr. Rich's collection ; the third and fourth are in the possession of private individuals. With the greatest difficulty, in my examination amongst the fallen edifices of Babel, and laborious search after every fragment and vestige of antiquity that might remain of a people of the primitive ages of the world, I had the good fortune to find one of these beautiful specimens of Babylonian brick-writing, in one of the innumerable unexplored winding passages, at the eastern side of that remarkable ruin the Kasr, or great castellated palace. It was deposited within a small square recess, near a fine perfect wall, the kiln-burnt materials of which were all laid in bitumen, and the ground was strewed with fragments of alabaster sarcophagi, and enamelled brick, still retaining a brilliant lustre.

Many fractured masses of granite of inconceivable magnitude, (some chiselled in a pyramidal form,) prevented my penetrating far into this intricate labyrinth ; the way to which

is by a *souterrain*, and must be entered in a creeping posture. The annexed engraving exhibits an exact representation of the shape of this cylindrical brick, which is very similar to those possessed by Mr. Rich; but its proportions are much greater, as it measures nine inches in length, by sixteen in circumference.



Babylonian cylinder in the Author's possession.

Bronze antiquities, generally much corroded with rust, but exhibiting small figures of men and animals, are often found amongst the

ruins: these are valuable and interesting, as being the earliest specimens of the metallurgic science.



Diodorus Siculus observes, that on the walls of the palace were colossal figures in bronze, χαλκας εικονας—representing Ninus, Semiramis, the principal people of their court; and even whole armies drawn up in order of battle.* These designs must have required the greatest skill, and no small labour. The art of fusing the most stubborn metals was

* Lib. ii. p. 97.

known from the earliest days, as we find in Genesis, chap. iv. ver. 22., that Zillah bore Tubal Cain, *an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron*; and the innumerable golden statues that ornamented the temple and palace, are sufficient proofs of the knowledge of this art. I was unsuccessful in tracing any samples of those mill-stones mentioned by Xenophon, in his *Anabasis*, lib. i. cap. 2. as having been dug up by the inhabitants of the Euphrates; which, after being formed, were conveyed to Babylon for sale.

At a considerable distance to the northward and eastward of El Hamir, a very large assemblage of mounds, the remains of some extensive buildings, are divided by a canal running south. The ground surrounding this spot is covered with nitre, and cut by countless canal beds of great antiquity; while very visible vestiges of ancient edifices exist: but the place being so far removed from the site of the venerable city, and seeing no end to my re-

searches if attempting to prosecute them farther to the eastward, which I well knew would have ended in disappointment, from the unsettled and unsafe state of the country; I was induced, however reluctantly, to retrace my steps to Hillah.

The direction from El Hamir to the town, was S. 60° W. for an hour, the whole of which time was occupied in crossing the dry beds of innumerable canals; some of great depth, and varying from ninety to one hundred and fifty feet in width. Their course was S.E. Other minor channels run north and south, extending as far as the eye can reach.

Three miles and a half from El Hamir, on the direct road to Hillah, in the centre of a small date grove, is situated the tomb of Ali Ibn Hassan. From this sequestered, shady, and beautiful spot, the Mujellibah bore N. 70° W., El Hamir, N. 45° W., and Hillah Minaret, S. 10° W. An hour and a half brought me to the bridge a little after sunset. It is not im-

probable that the above-noticed mounds may have formed some exterior building to the great metropolis; and the circumstance of the arrow-headed writing being engraved on the lower face of every brick, bears ample testimony to the great antiquity of the spot, were any doubt entertained, from its being so far removed from the generally received position of the walls of the city.

Desirous as I may be, of not hazarding an unfounded hypothesis, as to the portions of the ancient capital, which the remains now seen to the north-east and south-west of the river might have suggested; yet El Hamir and the Birs are so conveniently placed in those relative lateral bearings with the Kasr, as the central pile, at two extreme points of the quadrangular area of the city, that the probability of these two masses forming parts of its two farther quarters, often forced itself on my attention. As I have already observed, the mounds beyond El Hamir to the north-east, might too, if not

parts of the wall, have been suburban remains of this side of the metropolis. Speculation alone is left to us: until the ruins about this celebrated spot are more correctly observed and clearly delineated, little more can be said with truth as the basis of the assertion.

On the 6th of December, I bade adieu to Hillah and the majestic Euphrates. I could not but reflect, that the masses of the most ancient capitals in Europe bore no comparison with the mighty ruins which still exist on its banks. From an elevated spot near the village of Mohawwil, I turned to take a parting glance at the tenantless and desolate metropolis. It was impossible not to be reminded of the fulfilment of the predictions of Isaiah; and I involuntarily ejaculated, in the words of that sublime and poetical book:—"Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt

in from generation to generation; neither shall the Arabian pitch his tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there.* But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there. And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces." (*Isaiah*, chap. xiii. ver. 19, 20, 21, and part of 22.) How wonderful is the fulfilment of these predictions, and what a convincing argument of the truth and divinity of the Holy Scriptures!

It was after sunset: I saw the sun sink behind the Mujellibah: and, again taking a long last look at the decaying remains of Babylon and her deserted shrines, obeyed, with infinite regret, the summons of my guides.

* What a faithful picture of complete desolation is this!—for it is common in these parts for shepherds to make use of ruined edifices to shelter their flocks in; and it implies a great degree of solitude, when it is said, that the ruins of Babylon shall be fit for wild beasts only to resort to.

After traversing the vast wastes of Babylonia for three days, I reached Bagdad in safety ; inexpressibly delighted with the scenes I had contemplated during the ten days of absence from that city, the recollection of which, no time can ever efface from my memory.

APPENDIX.

A P P E N D I X.

N O T E S.

Note A, page 3.

[THE Tower at Dair.]—Fath Ulláh ebn Alwân il Kaabi, in his history of the modern Basrah, entitled *Zâd ul Musâfir*, written a century and a half ago, speaks of “Dair, a town north-west of Basrah, remarkable for a tower of such colossal dimensions and beautiful structure, as to appear to be the work of Genii.”—Ibn ul Wardi, in the *Khaûcilat ul Ajâib*, in addition to a similar account, says, that “strange sounds are occasionally heard to proceed from the interior of the tower.”

Great antiquity is attributed to this minaret by all the natives of the country. References to this spot, and to its old canal, which formed one of a number anciently excavated, to irrigate this dry though rich soil, might easily be multiplied, if necessary; but the two authorities above adduced appear sufficient to justify the remark in the text.

Note B, page 4.

[Koorna, or Apamea.]—Koorna was thus named by Seleucus, in honour of Apama, the daughter of Artabazus, the Persian.—See *Universal History, Ancient*, vol. ix. page 179, edit. 1747.

Note C, page 10.

[The Camel's thorn.]—This lowly plant affords a beautiful exemplification of the merciful care of Providence. It abounds in the deserts of Arabia, India, Africa, Tartary, and Persia. In most of these wilds it is the only food of the camel, that valuable inhabitant of such unfriendly wastes. Its lasting verdure refreshes the eye of the traveller; and, from the property possessed by its deep-searching tough roots, of collecting the scanty moisture of these arid plains, well known to the Arab, it is converted to the essential purposes of aiding in the production of a grateful and healthy nourishment for man.

The stem of the plant is in spring divided near the root; a single seed of the water-melon is then inserted in the fissure, and the earth replaced about the stem of the thorn. The seed becomes a parasite, and the nutritive matter which the brittle succulent roots of the melon are ill-adapted to collect, is abundantly supplied by the deeper searching,

and tougher fibres of the root of the camel's thorn. An abundance of good water-melons is thus periodically forced by the Arab from a soil incapable of other culture. This valuable native of the desert is the *hedysarum alhagi*. It bears its small oval leaves but a few days early in spring. The beautiful crimson flowers appear later in the same season, and are succeeded by the short moniliform pod peculiar to this genus.

Note D, page 14.

[Al Hid.]—This is a canal flowing into the Kerkha, near Hawizah, through groves of a species of calamus, growing luxuriantly in a low tract of country, between the Tigris and the Kerkha, inundated by the overflow of the former. On the subject of the canals and marshes of this region, an apposite quotation may be gleaned from a Persian biographical work, entitled *Megalis al Moumenîn*. The author of the *Moajum* (the celebrated Yacuti of Harna, the geographer,) remarks of Howaizah, that it is the diminutive of Houzah, which signifies collected or brought together. This district was peopled and organized by Amir Dabîs ebn Ghadhb the Asadi, in the Khalifat of Tayaa lillah, who here formed colonies of his tribe and dependants. This Dabîs is of the same tribe and name, though not the same individual, as the one who founded the town of Hillah on the Euphrates. Hawaizah is placed between Wâsit, Basrah, and Khuzistan,

in the midst of lakes and marshes which were formed by the inundations of the Tigris, in the time of Kesra Parwiz.

The same author also remarks, that the islands of Susiana are considered to form a part of this district. He enumerates three hundred and sixty distinct villages, the capital of which was named Madinah. They produced rice, dates, silk, oranges, limes, grapes, fish, and game in abundance. The inhabitants, who are Shiahhs, are very numerous, war-like, highly superstitious, and notoriously predatory and revengeful.

Note E, page 19.

[The Kelek, or leathern raft of Assyria.]—The mode of navigation on the Euphrates, with vessels so peculiarly constructed, as the *πλοῖα σκύτινα*, or *Navigia conacia* of the ancient, and the Kelek of the modern Babylonians, remains unaltered ; and it is but justice to the father of history to clear his text of the unintentional misinterpretation of his translators, and their followers, in this essential passage, and to prove more fully and clearly that he had seen what he so exactly depicts. It appears that the force of his description, and the error of his translators, are to be found here ; *νομέας ἰτέης ταμόμενοι ποιήσωνται, περιτείνουσι τούτοις δια φθέρας στεγαστρίδας ἔξωθεν ἐδάφεος τρέπον*, whereby the historian seems to describe most correctly what is done at the present day. It may be thus rendered : “ having felled wil-

low-spars, they put them in order, and extended around them outwardly leathern bags (*involucra vel segestria coriacea*,) as a substratum or pavement."

This giving a pavement or substratum of skins to a raft of willow-spars tied tight together, has been misinterpreted willow-ribs covered with a coating of skins. At present, the trunk of the wild poplar is made use of, which is supported upon inflated bags of sheepskin flayed with peculiar art. The boat is managed as described by Herodotus; the spars are separated and sold at Bagdad; and the emptied skins carried back on camels, horses, mules, or asses, as best may suit the proprietor of them, to serve in supporting another load of spars and merchandise.

Besides the Kellek, or raft, there is a round ribbed boat, or corricle, used on the Tigris and Euphrates, covered, not with skins, but bitumen. But of this, the only valuable article is the bitumen; the ribs are of thin willow rods, or the midrib of the frond of the date-tree, and are useless, if the boat be broken up.

Two other kinds of boats used on both rivers, one long, sharp, and narrow, and another high and crescent-shaped, both rudely formed with wooden ribs and planks, and coated with bitumen, deserve to be noticed here; they however have nothing to do with the description of the air-supported raft of the venerable and veracious Historian.—See Herodotus, *Clio*. chap. 194.

Differing as the explanation of this passage of Herodotus, as here given, does from the descriptions of two modern

scholars celebrated for their knowledge of the dialect of their ancient original, it is perhaps necessary that the ground of difference or dissent should be explored. The authorities here relied upon are, the present method of construction of the vessel presumed to be alluded to by Herodotus, and the facility with which the interpretation herein adopted, may be derived from the meanings applicable to the words of the text. Had not the word *νομέας* once occurred in the chapter whence it was quoted, in a sense adverse to such a signification, it might have been interpreted "campestris" and "agrestis," as attributive of *ἰτέης* the willow; but it has been translated by "ribs," and "costas," derivable, I suppose, from "divido," one acceptance of "*νέμω*" the root; while ours would have flowed from "pasco," the other signification of the same.

The term "*στεγαστρίδας*" is rendered by the word "bags," because "segestrium," or "segestre," its Latin equivalents, express something not remotely dissimilar to the term here used:—they mean ticken or linen, or leathern sack, which contains the stuffing of a mattress or quilt, particularly, as well as these last generally; they also signify the wrappers in which various goods are contained, or with which they are enveloped. Now the leathern bags, or sacks, on which the spars of the raft rest, are precisely the same as those in which goods of various kinds are preserved by the Arabs of Mesopotamia to this day.

Note F, page 29.

It may here be not devoid of amusement to offer some war-cries of the Arab tribes variously versified.

S O N G.

I.

The Youth of the Hero, though quenched in war,
Than Eld of the Craven is dearer far.

Chorus.

A fair maid for the brave ;
A deep brand for the slave,
Who can shun the death strife,
For contemptible life.

S O N G.

II.

Why pause ye, friends? Our daughters urge
On, though their song our dying dirge.

Chorus.

Our charge the spring torrent,
The wild rushing current ;
Our blade the red lightning,
Our havoc o'er-bright'ning.

S O N G.

III.

Nor spare thy noble blood,
Thou chieftain Arab free !
Thy boy but marks the flood,
That he may bleed like thee.

Chorus.

If war be thy feast,
If sloth be thy fast,
Then not thou the least
Nor honour'd the last.

S O N G.

IV.

Welcome the cry of the foeman to war!
My brand shall gleam o'er him his fatal star.

Chorus.

Whose the desert couch
Ne'er to foe may crouch;
Thick, though, as the sands,
Charge the rival bands.

S O N G.

v.

Strive nobly, martyr, and be free ;
Heaven opes, and Houris strive for thee.

Chorus.

None shall wed the flying slave ;
E'en dogs shall bay the dastard knave.

A few remarks are here necessary, from the attempt which has been made to render the Arabic as closely as possible into English verse. Each song and chorus form a separate cry sung by the bravest of the tribe who advance to battle ; the song, by three or four of the most expert, and the chorus in replication by the remainder. The women often accompany the men, and encourage them by songs and musical instruments ; and revive their drooping powers by administering water during the battle.

This encouragement is alluded to in the second specimen. In the third, allusion is made to the fast of the month Ramdhan, and the festival at its conclusion ; comparing war to the pleasures of the second, and peaceful sloth to the bitterness of the other. The figure in the last chorus points at the dishonour of an Arab flying from battle to his tents ; where not only the tribe itself, but the very dogs shun the coward.

Note G, page 51.

[Sepulchral vases.]—By some who have lately described these lugubrious vestiges of the Babylonians, they have been assumed to contain the bones of Greeks and Romans, rather than of Asiatics; from the presumption that such a mode of burial did not accord with the religious opinions and institutions of these last.*

The following quotation will prove the contrary, as well as the fact, that similar vases are found in abundance in situations where these two great Western Empires had not colonised, or even inhabited; at Bushire, for instance, the Mesambria of Nearchus and Arrian, within less than two miles of the sea-shore. The passage referred to is taken from Mr. Erskine's translation of the "Desâtir;" and is given in the words of that accomplished Orientalist.—See Desâtir, vol. ii. page 29, verse 154, of the Book of the Prophet, the Great Abâd.

"A corpse you may place in a vase of aquafortis, or consign it to the fire, or to the earth.—Commentary. The usage of the Fersendajians regarding the dead, was this: After the soul had left the body, they washed it in pure water, and dressed it in clean and perfumed vestments;

* See Rich's Second Memoir on the Ruins of Babylon, twenty-ninth page. Keppel's Travels, vol. i. pages 200, 201, second edition; and also, the Travels of Sir Robert Ker Porter in Babylonia, vol. ii. p. 373.

they then put it into a vase of aquafortis, and when the body was dissolved, carried the liquid to a place far from the city, and poured it out; or else they burned it in fire, after attiring it as has been said; or they made a dome, and formed a deep pit within it, which they built and whitened with stone, brick, and mortar; and, on its edges, niches were constructed and platforms erected, on which the dead were deposited; *or they buried a vase in the earth, and enclosed the corpse in it*; or buried it in a coffin in the ground; and, in the estimation of the Fersendajians, the most eligible of all these was the vase of aquafortis."

Note H, page 71.

[Tâq i Kesra.]—Hamdallah Mustoufî, in the geographical treatise entitled *Nozhat ul Qûlûb*, says, that Madâyen is the work of Tahmûrath Dîvband, of the Pîshdûdî dynasty of Persian kings, who named it Gardâbâd; Jumshîd completed it, and called it Teisebûn. It is the largest of the seven chief cities of Irâq, and was thence called Madâyen. Its six rivals are Kadesîah, Rûmîah, Hîrah, Bâbil, Halwân, and Nahrawân; all of which are now in ruins. Jumshîd built a stone bridge over the Diglah, which excited the admiration of Alexander; but the succeeding Persian race of kings destroyed this noble specimen of art.

Ardashir Babegan, who improved the city and made it his capital; was desirous of restoring the bridge, but without

effect; he consequently formed one of chains. The succeeding Kesras retained this city as their capital, which Shapour Dhu 'l Aktâf embellished, and wherein Nushirwân erected the Aiwan i Kesrâ. This is a palace built of burnt bricks and lime; and to this time not a brick has been removed.

The area of the building was a square of one hundred and fifty gaz; its principal hall was forty-two gaz in extent, eighty-two long, and sixty-five high. Encircling it were smaller buildings and apartments worthy of the principal structure.

Abu Dawaniq, the Khalifah, was desirous of removing the materials of this city for the use of his projected capital at Bagdad; Sooleimân ebu Khâlid, his Wazir, dissuaded him from this, saying, that he would be reproached by mankind, for the destruction of one city to aid in the foundation of another, as betraying a want of resources.

The monarch reprobated his minister's lurking tenderness for the fame of the Kesra; and, commencing the work of destruction, soon found that the expense attendant on the disjunction and removal of the materials of the city would far exceed the cost of new preparations. He was now anxious to desist; but was reminded by the Wazir, that, having commenced, he should persevere, or he would be exposed to the imputation of being less powerful than the founders of the city. Sooleimân advised however, at the same time, that the tâq, or arch, should remain untouched, as a lasting evidence to mankind of the prophetic character

of Mohammed, on the night of whose birth it was miraculously rent. Madayen is now in ruins. On the western side, however, a small town remains; and on the eastern, the tomb of Selman i Farsi.

Note I, page 77.

The following explanatory lines may be added from the Oriental Dictionary of D'Herbelôt, *in voce*.

[Selman.]—"Abou Abdalla Selman Al Farsi, appelé aussi Selman Al Khair. C'est le nom d'un affranchi de Mahomet, qui étoit Persien de nation. L'on dit qu'il étoit Chrétien, et qu'il avoit lû les livres Saints et voyagé beaucoup. Cependant, il fût des premiers et des plus considérables entre les Musulmans; ensuite que quelques-uns disent de luy que bana aleslam, c'est à dire, que c'est luy qui bâti le Musulmanisme.

"Il y a dans la vie de Mahomet, que dans la journée du Khandak, c'est à dire, du fossé ou de la tranchée, Mahomet ayant assigné quarante brasses de terrain à creuser pour chaque dizaine d'hommes, chacun vouloit avoir Selman de son côté, à cause de sa vigueur, et les fugitifs de la Mecque d'un côté et les Auxiliaires de Médine de l'autre, étant divisez sur son sujet, Mahomet prononça ces paroles : Selman menna ahel albeit—Selman est à nous et de nôtre Maison; et il ajoûta même, V hou ahed alladhin eschtacat

al'iahem alginnat—et il est un de ceux que le Paradis désire, c'est à dire, du nombre des predestinez.

“ L'Auteur du Raoudhât alakhîar rapporte, que Selman mourut dans la ville de Madaï'n, capitale de la Perse, de laquelle Omar l'avoit fait Gouverneur l'an 35 de l'Hegire, à l'âge de deux cent cinquante ans.

“ Le même auteur ajoute, qu'il vivoit du travail de ses mains, et qu'il donnoit le surplus de ce qu'il gagnoit aux pauvres. Abon Horaïrah et Ans Ben Malek, deux personnages de grande autorité sur les traditions, avoient reçu les leurs de Selman, et Selman immédiatement de Mahomet.”

Note K, page 90.

[Bagdad.]—The following account of this celebrated city is extracted from the Noshat ul Qûlûb of Hamdallah Mustoufi.

“ Bagdad is the metropolis of the Arabian Irâq, and a city of Islâm, situated on the Diglah. In the age of the Kesras, there was on this site, on the western side, a village named Kerkh, founded by Shâpûr Dhu 'l Aktâf; and on the eastern bank the small town of Sâbât, a dependency of Nahrawân.

“ The Kesrâ Anûshirwân laid out ten parks and gardens in the open country in the vicinity, and called them Bâghdâd. By the Arabs it is named Qûbbet ul Islâm. Almansûr Billah, the second Abbasside Khalif, surnamed Abu Dawâniq, founded the city A. H. 145, building chiefly on the western

shore. His son, Mahdî Billah, fixed his seat on the eastern side of the river, and added considerably to the mass of edifices, which, in the reign of his successor, Hârûn, were increased to the extent of an area of four Farsakhs, by one and a half. His heir, Mootasim Billah, removed the capital to Sâmirah, to free the inhabitants from the violence of his Mamelukes.

“His example was followed by seven of his successors, until, in the reign of Mootadhid Billah, the sixteenth Abbasside Khalif, the seat of government was transferred to Bagdad, where all his successors have retained it. Mûktafî Billah, the son of the preceding, founded the Dâr v Shâtî-bîyyah, and the Jâmaa, on the eastern shore; and Mûstadhîr Billah surrounded it with a ditch, and wall of lime and kilnbricks; the portion of which to the east, named Haramain, was eighteen thousand kâms long, and had four gates; the Khorâsân, the Khilif, the Hatabîyyah, and the Sûq ús Sûltân.

“The western, or quarter of Kerkh, is guarded by a wall of twelve thousand kâms; and most of the edifices of the city are] of lime, and burnt bricks.”—The author describes the air as good to strangers, or natives; the inhabitants, and particularly the women, as healthy, fat, ruddy, and devoted to gaiety; cattle as thriving, but some kinds scarce; the pasturage excellent; the grain abundant, and highly nutritive. The soil rich and productive, rather more favourable for plants of warm than cool stations. He particularly alludes to the lofty stature which the *Tamarix Orientalis*

and the *Ricinus Communis* usually attain in the genial soil of this country. Shrines, and tombs of holy men, are abundant, both in the city and in its immediate and more remote vicinity; too numerous to be noticed in this place.

[L. M. N.]

These refer to some Arabic notes in the author's possession, which it was first intended to give in the Appendix, but which it was afterwards thought desirable to omit.

Note O, page 111.

[Nabocadnassar.]—"Les Arabes appellent ainsi celui que nous appellons vulgairement Nabuchodonosor. Ce mot Arabe est assez conforme au nom que les Hebreux lui donnent. Les mêmes Arabes appellent plus ordinairement ce Prince, qui étoit Roi des Assyriens et des Babyloniens, Bakht, ou Bokht al Nassar, nom qui est aussi le plus en usage chez les Persans et chez les Turcs. Les Historiens Orientaux, et principalement les Persiens, donnent aussi à ce Prince les noms de Raham et de Gudarz."—D'Herbelôt, tome 3, page 1.

Note P, page 120.

[Hillah.]—The author of the *Majalis ul Moumenîn*, under the article of Hillah, states, that it is a large city between

Kûfah and Baghdád, and that the site was originally named Jâmiain. The first individual who settled and constructed houses on the spot was Amir Seif ud doulah Sadagah ebn Mansúr ebn Ali ebn Mazîd the Asadi, whose ancestors dwelt in the neighbourhood of Nîl, on the Euphrates. While the different Seljicke Princes of Irâq were in open dissension against each other, he acquired rank and riches, kept up an army, and in Moharram of the year A. H. 595, came to Jâmiain, and encamped in the neighbourhood of, what then was, a forest tenanted solely by animals of prey. He shortly cleared the place, and founded a city, which became in time one of the most flourishing of Irâq; and this is the modern Hillah.

Note Q, page 161.

BABEL.

Extracts from Masûdi.

[I.]—The Farât then flows on to Rakkah, to Rakkah, Hît, and Ambâr, at which point several canals are divided from the river; as, for instance, the canal of Isâ, which, after passing beyond Baghdad, falls into the Diglah. It then winds towards the sites of Sûrâ, Kasr ebn Hobairah, Kûfah, Jâmiain, Ahmedabad, Albirs, and the mounds, &c. &c.—*Vide Mas. chapter of the course of the river Farât.*

[II.]—Many of the most able and distinguished historians are of opinion that the first kings of Bâbil were those pris-

tine monarchs of the world who first settled and civilized mankind, and that the first race of Persian potentates were their successors by conquest, as the empire of Rome increased on the subjection of the Greeks.

They maintained, that the first of these Princes of Bâbil was Nemroud the Mighty, whom they suppose to have reigned during sixty years, and to whom they attribute the excavation of the canals, in the province of Irâq, derived from the stream of the Farât. One of these is the celebrated canal of Kûthâ, on the road to Kûfah, between Kasr ebn Habairah and Baghdad.—*See Mas. chapter of the Kings of Babel.*

[III.]—The capital of the kingdom of Aferaidûn was Bâbil; which is one of the climates of the earth, so designated from the name proper to one of its towns. This town is situated on both banks of one of the canals derived from the Farât, in the province of Irâq, distant an hour's journey from the city named Jisr. i. Bâbil and the canal of Albirs; from which last-named town, the produce of the Birsæan looms, the cloths of Birs, derive their appellation.

Near the town of Bâbil is an excavation usually known as the well of the prophet Daniel, which is much frequented, both by Jews and Christians, on certain anniversary festivals peculiar to each sect. Any individual visiting this town cannot but be struck by the amazing mass of ruined structures thrown together in scarcely distinguishable heaps.

The opinion is very prevalent that these are Hârût and Mârût, the angels mentioned in the Koran, in the passage which marks the fate and designation of Bâbil.—*See Mas. Chap. Of the Kings of Babil.*

[IV.]—Muhammad ebn Histram al Kalbi relates, on the authority of his father, and other Arabian authors of note, that they believed that the first king of the world was Ashkedan ; and that thus also were named the earliest monarchs of the first race of the Persian kings, down to Dârâ ebn Dârâ. The next were called Ardawân, who were princes of the Nabatæan race, and of the number of the Mûlûk ûl Tawâ'yif. They were of the province of Irâk from the vicinity of Kasr ebur Hobâ'rah and the river Farât, and Jâmiain and Sûrâ and Ahmedabad, and Albirs to the districts bordering on the sea and its shores.—*See Mas. Chap. Of the Persian Kings intermediate between the first and second dynasty.*

Note R, page 174.

[Nil Canal.]—This canal is so named from a town on the Euphrates, between Baghdad and Kufah, according to *Abul-feda* in his table of Irâq ; and *Semaanî*, in voce, in his *Kitâb ul Ansâb*, says that indigo was there made and sold.

Note S. page 183.

[The Athlah.]—This picturesque inhabitant of Babylon is, if not a distinct species, at least a beautiful variety of the *Tamarix Orientalis*, which it resembles in every respect, except that the common petioles, on which the small scaly leaves are strung, are longer, more slender, and less burthened with leaves, springing from the sides, than the common Tamarisk of the country. From the Arabic *Materia Medica* of Ebn Kibtî the Baghdadî who flourished A. H. 711, may be learnt, *in voce*, that the "Athl is a large variety of the Turfâ, or Tamarisk; and is a well-known tree which the people of Baghdad plant over their graves, and in other situations. It rivals the tallest cypresses in stature."—See, in confirmation, Note K.*

Note T, page 202.

[The Birs.]—The word Birs, as applied to the mound of Nimrod, cannot be satisfactorily explained in Arabic as a derivative of this language; and it would appear, that all attempts to deduce it from the Hebrew or Chaldaic tongues, have failed; as they are founded on a

* My friend, Aylmer Bourke Lambert, Esq. Vice President of the Linnean Society, FRS. MRAS. &c. &c. showed me a beautiful specimen of the *Tamarix Orientalis*, which I found to be the same as the Athlah.

change of the radical letters of the word, the great and overwhelming sin of most etymologists. The *Qamûs* gives *Birs* as the name of a town or district between *Hillah* and *Kufah*, which is still known; and is conjoined with *Babel*, in the Chaldaic *Sîdrâ Rabbâ* of the Sabæans, under the name of *Bârsîf*; whence the *Borosippa* of *Strabo*, and other ancient authors, directly proceeds.

Note V, page 203.

[*Nemrod*.]—In the first chapter of *Masûdî's General History*, near its close, the author remarks, that, of the sons of *Shem*, son of *Noah*, *Mâsh*, son of *Aram*, son of *Shem*, occupied the land of *Babel*; where was born *Nimrod*, son of *Mâsh*, who erected the vast Tower or Palace at *Babel*, and a bridge on the *Euphrates*. He was king of *Nabat*, and in his reign the separation of tongues took place.

Masûdî places the birth of this mighty monarch, to whom he attributes a reign of five hundred years' duration, in the age of *Reu*, son of *Peleg*. In this age, too, appeared the first dawns of idolatry; which mode of adoration was adopted to avert public evils of various kinds that threatened the existing race of mankind.

The author farther states, that in the life of *Terah*, also named *Azar*, the worship of the heavenly bodies was introduced by *Nimrod*, and their respective gradations of rank ascertained. Great public calamities, and changes of domi-

nion in the East and in the West, occurred at this time, a period equally remarkable for the introduction of astrology, and the influence of its predictions on the minds of men. Nimrod was also informed that a child would be born, who would dissipate these idle dreams, and destroy their idolatry; which inducing the monarch to command the presence of the child, Abraham was placed in concealment. When he had advanced a little in age, he came forth from his cave, and, attracted by the beauty of the heavenly host, admired each in succession, and pronounced it to be his Lord.

Gabriel however turned his heart, and instructed him in the love and adoration of the One Eternal God. Abraham increased in holiness and piety, and derided and exposed the gods of his tribe and people. Their complaint was carried to Nimrod, who exposed him to the action of fire; but the Lord kept him cool and unhurt: and in that day, the planets, and their temples, in all parts of the earth, were humbled.

Hamdallah Mustoufi, in his chapter on mountains, rivers, &c. and in his first division, treating of the direction and extent of the routes and roads of Persia towards the neighbouring countries, remarks as follows:—"From Baghdad to Najaf, beyond the limit of Irân, are, first to the village of Sarsar, two farsangs; thence to the village of Qarâjeh, seven farsangs; thence to the *river of Nil*, seven farsangs; within half a farsang of which station, on the banks of the Farât, is the city of Bâbil. From the river of Nil to the town of Hillah, are two farsangs; thence to the city of Kûfah, seven farsangs; and one farsang on the left

of this road is *Birs*, which was a residence of Nemrodd, at which he exposed Ibrahim Khalil, on whom be peace, to the action of fire."

To these notices it may be as well to subjoin a few particulars collected from other sources, confirmative of the account of the Arabian Historian above quoted. Terah, the father of Abraham, it is said, (Suidas, in voce, Ἀβραάμ, and Σεργχ, Lex. tom. i. and ii.) made statues and images for the purposes of that idolatrous worship, which had been transmitted to him from his ancestor Serug, and which he encouraged by example and exhortation.

Some Jewish authors relate (apud Genebrand, in Chron.) that Abraham pursued the same occupation; and Maimonides (More Nevochim, c. 29.) says, that he was educated in the religion of the Sabæans, who acknowledged no deity but the stars, and that he was led by his own reflection, to the belief of an intelligent Creator and Governor of the universe; but that he did not renounce paganism till the fiftieth year of his age. That he was brought up in the religion of the Sabæans, is an opinion adopted by Spencer, (De Leg. Heb. Ritual. lib. ii. c. i. § 2. vol. i. 279.—See Sabaism.)

Suidas (*ubi supra*,) informs us, that at sixteen years of age he cautioned his father against seducing men to idolatry for the sake of pernicious gain, and taught him that there is no other God besides [Him who dwells in Heaven, and created the whole world. It is added, that he destroyed the statues and images of his father, and departed with him from Chaldæa.

Others relate, (Heidegger Hist. Patriarch, tom. iii. p. 36.) that his father deputed Abraham to sell his statues in his absence, and that a man, who pretended to be a purchaser, having ascertained that he was fifty years of age, remonstrated with him for adoring, at such an age, a being which is but a day old. Abraham, impressed and confounded by this remonstrance, destroyed them all, excepting the largest, before his father's return; and he told him, that having presented an oblation of flour to the idols, the stoutest of them, in whose hands he had placed a hatchet, hewed the others to pieces with that weapon.

Terah replied, that this was bantering, because the idols had not sense to act in this manner; upon which Abraham retorted these words upon his father against the worship of such gods. But he was delivered up by Terah to Nimrod, the sovereign of the country; and because he refused to worship the fire, according to his order, he was thrown into the midst of the flames, from which he escaped uninjured.

Mr. David Levi, in his *Lingua Sacra*, has given an account of this tradition extracted from *Medrash Bereschith*: and it is related by Jerome, (Trad. Hebraic, in Genesin,) who seems to admit its general credibility. However, if we allow that Abraham, being born and educated in an idolatrous country and family, might have been addicted in very early life to that superstition, it is certain that he renounced it, and that he was providentially removed from a scene of danger, and that he contributed to propagate just sentiments concerning the Deity

wherever he sojourned. The fame of his wisdom, piety, and virtue, spread far and wide among the nations of the world: this appears from the testimonies of Berosus, Hecatæus, Nicholas of Damascus, cited by Josephus, (*Antiq. b. i. c. 7. apud Oper. tom. i. p. 28. ed Haverc.*) and also from what is said of him by Alexander Polyhistor, Eupolemus, Artapenus, and others, whose testimonies may be seen in Eusebius's *Præp. Evang. lib. ix. cap. 16, 17, 18, 19.* His name is mentioned with honour all over the East to this day. In just deduction from the premises detailed, it may be affirmed, that the Divine promise to this Patriarch was the foundation of that grand scheme for preventing the 'universal prevalence of idolatry, and for preserving among mankind the knowledge and worship of the only true God, which, after undergoing several variations and improvements, was to last to the end of time.

“Les Arabes disent, que ce mot signifie la même chose que *Mared*; c'est à dire, un rebelle et un revolté, nom qui convient fort bien à celui qui fut l'auteur de la première revolte des hommes contre Dieu, par la structure qu'il entreprit de la Tour de Babel, et c'est celui que nous appellons *Nembrod*.

“Selon le *Tarikh Montekheb*, le *Nembrod* des Hebreux est le même que le *Zhohac* des Persiens, roy de la première dynastie des princes qui ont régné dans le monde depuis le déluge. Mais, selon l'auteur du *Mefatih alôloun*, *Nembrod* est le même que *Caïcaous*, second roy de la seconde

dynastie de Perse, nommée des Caïanides. Ce même auteur donne au mot de Nemrod, ou Nemroud, une étymologie Persienne, à sçavoir, Nemurd, qui signifie celui qui ne mourut point ; et il dit, que ce surnom d'Immortel fut donné à Caïcaous, à cause des longues années qu'il regna. Car tous les Historiens de Perse le font regner plus de cent cinquante ans.

“ Mirkhoud, dans son Raoudhat Alsafa, écrit conformément au sentiment de cet auteur que nous venons d'alléguer, que l'on a imputé à Caïcaous la folie de vouloir escalader le Ciel, ce qui convient assez bien avec le dessein extravagant de Nemrod et des autres constructeurs de la Tour de Babel, de la manière qu'il est couché dans les livres saints.

“ Mais ce même auteur ajoute, qu'il n'y a guères d'apparence, que Caïcaous, qui a passé pour un Prince fort sage entre les Persans, ait eu une telle pensée. Car pour monter au Ciel, poursuit Mirkhoud, parlant en bon Musulman, il faudroit être monté sur un Al Borac, et conduit par Gabriel, ce qui étoit réservé par un privilege singulier à Mahomet.

“ L'auteur du Lebtarikh dit, que Nemrod étoit Ben Kenâan, Ben Kham ; c'est à dire, fils de Chanaan et petit fils de Cham, fils de Noé, et qu'il étoit frère de Cous, surnommé en Persien Fil Dendan ; c'est à dire, Dent d'Elephant. Ce Cous, ou Caous, pourroit être Chus, fils de Chanaan, dont parle l'Ecriture, et duquel sont descendus les Abissins ou Ethiopiens, que les Juifs appellent encore aujourd'hui Conschüm.

“ L'auteur du livre intitulé Mâlern fait le récit fabuleux

d'une Histoire, de laquelle il prend Ali pour garant, dans les termes qui suivent.

“ Nemrod ayant fait jetter Abraham, qui refusoit de le reconnoître pour le souverain Maître et le Dieu du monde, dans une fournaise ardente, surpris de l'en voir sortir sans avoir souffert la moindre atteinte du feu, dit à ses courtisans : ‘ Je veux aller au Ciel pour y voir ce Dieu si puissant qu'Abraham nous prêche.’ Ces gens luy ayant représenté, que le Ciel étoit bien haut, et qu'il n'étoit pas facile d'y arriver, Nemrod ne se rendit point à leurs avis, et commanda en même tems, que l'on bâtît une tour la plus élevée qu'il se pourroit. On travailla trois ans entiers à ce bâtiment ; et Nemrod étant monté jusqu'au plus haut, fut bien étonné, en regardant le Ciel, de le voir encore aussi éloigné de luy, que s'il ne s'en fut pas approché. Mais ce qui luy causa et donna plus de confusion, fut d'apprendre le lendemain, que cette haute tour avoit été renversée.

“ Nemrod ne fut point rebuté cependant par un accident si étrange, et voulut que l'on en rebâtît une autre plus forte et plus haute. Mais cette seconde tour eut le même destin que la première, ce qui fit prendre à cet insensé le dessein ridicule de se faire porter jusqu'au Ciel dans un coffre, tiré par quatre de ces oiseaux monstrueux, nommez Kerkes, dont les anciens auteurs de l'Orient font mention dans leurs romans.

“ Le même auteur décrit exactement cette machine, de quelle manière ces oiseaux y étoient attachez, et dit enfin, que Nembrod s'étant apperçu de l'inutilité de son projet, après avoir erré et volé quelque tems par les airs, plongea si

rudement en terre que la montagne ou ces oiseaux le jetterent, en fut ebranlée, suivant ce qui est porté dans l'Alcoran au chapitre intitulé Ibrahim, v. en kair mekrhom letezoul menho algebab ; c'est à dire, *les machines et les stratagèmes des impiés, vont jusqu'à faire trembler les montagnes.*

“ Nembrod, après avoir vû echoüer une entreprise téméraire, et ne pouvant faire la guerre à Dieu même en personne, comme il avoit projeté, au lieu de reconnoître la puissance de ce souverain Maître et d'adorer son unité, persista toujours dans le sentiment impie qu'il avoit de luy même, et continua à maltraiter tous ceux qui adoroient une autre divinité que luy dans ses états. C'est ce qui fit que Dieu luy ôta, par la division et par la confusion des langues, la plus grande partie de ses sujets, et punit ceux qui demeurèrent attachez à luy, par une nuée de mouchérons qui les fit presque tous perir, selon le rapport de Demiathi.

“ L'auteur du Lebab ajoute, qu'un de ces mouchérons étant entré par les narines de Nembrod, penetra jusqu'à une des membranes de son cerveau, où grossissant de jour en jour, il luy causa une si grande douleur, qu'il étoit obligé de se faire battre la tête avec un maillet, pour pouvoir prendre quelque repos, et qu'il souffrit ce supplice pendant l'espace de quatre cent ans, Dieu voulant punir par la plus petite de ses créatures, celui qui se vantoit insolemment d'être le Maître de tout. Ebn Batrik dit que Nembrod étoit Mage et Sabien de religion, et que ce fut luy qui établit le premier le culte et l'adoration du feu.

“ Il y a des historiens qui appellent les plus anciens rois des

Babyloniens, qui ont succédé à Nembrod, Nemared ; c'est à dire, les Nembrodiens. Car ce mot de Nemared est pluriel Arabe que Nembrod, et signifie aussi dans la même langue des rebelles et des tyrans."—D'Herbelôt, tome troisième, page 32.

Note W, page 220.

[Al Hámir.]—This word appears to be derived from the Arabic root hamara, which signifies to be, or become red. It is the form of the present participle, and has been applied to this mound, to denote the red mass or edifice. The colour and its attributive name are favourites with the people of the East generally, as "purple" and "porphyrian" seem to have been in the ancient West. Alhambra also, one of the four wards of the ancient city of Granada, is deducible from the same root. It was so called by the Moors, from the red colour of its materials, Alhambra signifying a red house. Sir Robert Porter asserts that Al Hymer (as he calls it) is not to be traced from the Arabic, whereas it is one of the commonest words in the language.

Note X, page 223.

[Babylonian Bricks.]—Beloe, in his Translation of Herodotus, Clio. cap. 179, says—"They used as cement a composition of heated bitumen, which, mixed with the tops of

ree d, was placed betwixt every thirtieth course of bricks.” The passage in the Latin translation of Laing’s edition of Wesseling’s Herodotus, is better rendered, and more conformable with the mode of cement preserved to this day. “ Postea pro cœno vel calce utentes bitumine ferventi et per tricesimas latericias compages constipantes crates arundinum,” &c. &c.

The text of Herodotus is still the most correct of the three, for his τέλματι is the clay cement now used ; for which the ασφάλτω θερμῇ, or simple hot bitumen, was substituted in the courses near the earth, or under it ; his ταρσοὺς κάλαμων, the stems, and not the tops of the reeds, which to this day appear in layers between the bricks at the ruins of Babel. Beloe’s version of this passage is licentious ; and Herodotus still the best and clearest narrator.

HISTORY OF MODERN BUSSORAH,

BETWEEN THE YEARS OF THE MOHAMMEDAN ÆRA,
953 AND 1076:

EQUIVALENT TO THOSE OF THE CHRISTIAN
PERIOD, 1546 AND 1665.

N.B. The notes to this Account of Bussorah immediately succeed the text.

THE following is a short, though correct, sketch of the history of *modern* Bussorah, between the years of the Mohammedan æra, 953 and 1076, equivalent to those of the Christian period, 1545 and 1665. It is taken from the work of a learned Arab of the tribe Kââb, that at present occupy a large portion of Susiana, the modern Kuzistan, on the left bank of the Euphrates. He was an eye-witness, and even a sufferer in some of the scenes described in the latter portion of the narrative. The history

was composed in the year of the Hejrah, 1078. A. D. 1667.

The geographical matter contained in the notes subsequent to, and illustrative of, the historical portion of this narrative, will tend to explain the positions laid down in the map prefixed to this work; it is completely new, and from a source not usually accessible to Englishmen.

Bosairah is the diminutive of Basrah, a well-known city and district on the banks of the Shat ûl Arab, the *modern* Busrah. The united streams of the Digleh and Farât, from their confluence at the fort of Koornah, flow past its site. The ancient Basrah, built in the age of Omar ebn ul Khattab, is now in ruins. Shobî says, that in it was the mosque of Ali, son of Abû Tâlib, now also in ruins.* Two hundred ratls of dates were there sold for a dînâr. One of its canals, in the days of its prosperity, was that of Obillah, perhaps the Ashâr of the pre-

* See Note, page 287.

sent day ; and Obillah itself probably the modern Basrah.

A canal, called Ashâr, intersects the modern Basrah in a south-westerly direction. The division on its right, or north-western bank, is called Nadhrân. Many lesser canals are derived from the principal stream of the Ashâr, towards the south-east ; on which are placed other flourishing divisions of the district which, in their aggregate, constitute what is now called Basrah.

The first of these is Boraiha ; * next Toofhat ul Abbâs ; then Saimar ; Mahallat ahl id Dair ; Al Hoûz ; Almin Kisar ; in which are the residence of the Governor and the custom-house, where duties on the various imports from India, Arabia, and Turkey, are levied. Others of its well-peopled quarters are Mishrâq ; Sûg ul Ghazl ; Muhommad ul Jawâd ; Adhaibah ; Nabbat ul Jabâl, &c. ; as well as many more, which, with their bazaars, well supplied with

* See Note A.

every necessary article, exceed all description.

The tide waters its gardens twice in a day and night, which produce delicious fruits of every kind, pleasing to the eye, or gratifying to the palate. The whole of these divisions, as well as that first named, Nadhrân, are included within a fortified wall. Basrah was taken in the reign of Sultân Sulaimân, son of Salîm, from the Arab Al. e. Maghâmis úl Muntafiq, A. H. 935. Sultan Mûhammad, son of Morad, whose reign commenced A. H. 1002, reigned nine years; in his reign Afrâsiâb Pasha governed Basrah.

Shaikh Abdul Ali ben Rahmah, however, in his work, Qatr úl Ghamâm, conceives, that he is referable to Dair only on the mother's side; and that his paternal ancestry is deducible from the Seljucks of Tartary; from whose monarchs, after the lapse of fourteen successions, the power of this house passed to Othman, the founder of the Ottoman dynasty.

The father of Afrâsiâb unquestionably mar-

ried a lady of Dair, from whom issued the subject of this memoir. The cause of his elevation to the government of Basrah, as far as can be discovered, was as follows. He was writer in the office of military account at Basrah, at a period when the inhabitants united to expel their Turkish Pasha, named Ali, who finding his revenues daily decreasing, and with them the resource for maintaining his garrison, sold the government to Afrâsiâb for eight hundred purses, of 3000 muhammadiis each: under the sole condition, that the Khotbah should continue to be delivered in the name of the Sultan Afrâsiâb, who agreed to the terms of contract, and the Turkish Pasha departed for Constantinople.

The government of Afrâsiâb was just and vigorous. He reduced the territory of Gobân, then held by a Turk named Bektash Agha, the scourge of his neighbours; the governor of Dûraq, and Seyyed Mubarek Khan, Prince of Hawizah.* The first he besieged and

* See Note B.

obliged to surrender with the sole promise of his life. He reduced all the islands of the lower river; and after compelling the Prince of Hawizah to restore the territory on the left bank of the Euphrates, dependent on Basrah, which he had usurped, he refused the future payment of a tribute formerly remitted to the Persians of that district. His power commenced A. H. 1005, and lasted seven years.

Afrâsiâb transmitted an hereditary succession to his son Ali Pasha, an encourager of learned men; a protector of his people; a wise and prudent administrator of the laws; and a cherisher of the resources of his territory. The celebrated poet, Shaikh Abdul Ali ebn Rahmah, the laureate of this house, shed a lustre on the age of Ali, whose court might justly be compared with that of Ras-chid, for the treasures of art, science, and literature which formed its splendid ornaments.

During this Pashalick, the islands of the higher Euphrates were subdued,* after having

* See Note C.

successfully resisted the armies of the Sultan. The fort of Muammir was wrested from the Pasha of Bagdad, and that of Zakkiah from the son of His Highness's deputy.

A large army was sent against him by the Persian King, Shah Abbâs; first under Imam Quli Khan, when the city maintained a powerful siege; but the love of the Pasha's subjects kept them firm in their adherence, till on the arrival, in the Persian camp, of intelligence of the decease of this monarch, they hastily retreated; abandoning their guns, baggage, and public property, to a large amount, in the year A. H. 1036. The power of Ali Pasha continued forty-five years.

Ali was succeeded by his son Hussein Pasha,* whose violence and injustice very soon estranged the hearts of his subjects, and encouraged his uncles, the sons of Afrâsiâb, Ahmed Agha, and Fathhî Beg, to revolt. They proceeded to Constantinople, and procured an order for the disposal of Hussein,

* See Note D.

and their own elevation in his stead. They were accompanied by a large army, under the command of Mûrtezâ Pasha of Bagdad.

When Hussein heard of their approach, he assembled his chief men in consultation ; but soon discovered that they were averse to him, and inclined to the interests of his uncles. He upon this fled with his family and dependants to Dûraq, where leaving his consort and her followers, he proceeded to Behbehan, and remained there.

In the mean time Mûrtezâ Pasha, with Ahmed Agha, and Fathhi Beg, entered Basrah without opposition ; and the Pasha was so pleased with the place, that he put the two sons of Afrâsiâb to death, and seized on the government for himself. This treacherous murder so disgusted the citizens and subjects, that they combined with the people of Jeza-yir, and rose in rebellion against Mûrtezâ, whose agents and servants they put to death wherever they were found ; and thus obliged

the Pasha to fly with the remainder of his suite and garrison.

The people of Basrah repented of their conduct to Hussein, who was still residing at Behbahan; they sent him offers of submission, and he gladly returned to his government A. H. 1064.

Hussein increased his former oppression of the people; but patronised literature with unbounded munificence; and exhibited the most vigilant submission to the power of the Sultan, from whom, by force of princely offerings, he bought the Wezarât.

A. H. 1073, Hussein advanced with an army against Lahsa, and having reduced it, plundered the inhabitants, and put many of them to death. This unprovoked aggression, however, drew upon him the anger of the Sultan. Muhammed Pasha, son of Ali Pasha, fled to Constantinople, and complained of the outrage committed by Hussein; which was punished by the despatch of an Imperial army

against Basrah, under Ibrahim Pasha. Hussein continued to govern, till this army came in the year first mentioned, from first to last, twenty-one years up to the period of his flight, as will be detailed hereafter.

In this year the Turks came in great force to *Bosairah*. Hussein Pasha, at this time governor of the country, heard of their approach, and adopted every means of resistance. He strengthened and added to the fortifications, and directed all useless members of the population to leave the city in successive bands, which movement commenced on the first of the month Jamâdi th. Thanî.

A portion of the citizens of most consideration having complied with the commands of the governor, the remainder evinced a disposition to resist his mandate. He however, suspecting their intentions, proclaimed that the life and property of any individual directed to depart, who should be found in the town on the third day subsequent, should be forfeited.

The proclamation above related, caused the

greatest confusion and misery to the inhabitants, who poured forth in such multitudes, as to impede the common passage; the sufferings of women, who, now for the first time, appeared unveiled, thinking only of their children, were indescribable. Some were so heavily laden, that both mother and infant perished on the road.

The ties of nature appeared dissolved: father, son, brother, and husband, deserted those dearest to them, and fled for individual safety. The author witnessed the heart-rending scene, which was aggravated by a deluge of rain, that destroyed the bridges at Boraiha and Minâwî.*

During the flight, many endeavoured to save themselves on frail rafts of reed, and the canal and rivers were filled with them. At length, on the fourth morning, the city of Basra, its bazaars, coffee-house, mosques, and squares, colleges, and places of public assembly, were wholly deserted.

* See Note E.

Hussein sternly continued his plan of rendering his country a desert ; and, in the middle of the month Rajab, the whole of the western bank of the river was cleared of inhabitants, who were plundered, beaten, and forced from their homes by two officers of Hussein, set over them ; namely, Ibn Shâter Ahmed, for Sirrajee,* and Amir Hassan ebn Jahmâs for the rest of the Junûb.†

Ibn Shater, surnamed Ali, was one of the slaves of Hussein ; while Amir Hassan, son of Thamas, was numbered among the free servants of Hussein Pasha ; and a native of Dûraq, of the tribe or quarter of Hauz. His father left his native place for Basrah, and entered the service of Hussein Pasha : owing, it is said, to the fear of Mahdî Sultan, governor of Dûraq. He presented a gift to Hussein Pasha, part of which was his son Hassan, whose fortunes were rapidly promoted, until he became deputed to the government of Gobân ; and

* See Note F.

† See Note G.

during his administration the events above narrated occurred.

The same system of depopulation was next extended to the district of the Shimal * and to the Jezâyer ; and was attended with similar scenes of misery, and the like disastrous results. In this case the exiles fled to Sahâb, Suaib, and Hawizah.

On the eighth of Shawwal, A. H. 1076., an imperial army, headed by Ibrâhîm Pasha of Bagdad, advanced against Basrah, for the purpose of deposing its Governor, who had incurred the displeasure of his Sovereign for his wanton attack on the Pashalick of Lahsa, before mentioned ; which was undertaken in consequence of the perfidious advice of Yahya Agha, the minister of Hussein Pasha. Ibrâhîm is said to have been attended by seven other Pashas, at the head of fifty thousand Imperial troops. On hearing this, Hussein raised the new fort of Qúmat, and prepared to sustain a siege.

* See Note H.

When Ibrâhîm had reached the town of Arja, on the Tigris, he called upon the allegiance of the people of Basrah, and particularly addressed himself to the powerful family of the Kawawizah,* at whose head now was Sheikh Dhu 'l Kafal. They threw off the authority of Hussein, expelled the females of his family from the town, and put to death the deputy, Muhammed ben Bûdâgh.

Hussein Pasha, on learning this, surprised the Kawawizah in the night, and decapitated Sheikh Dhu Kafal, whose death remained undiscovered till morning; and with whom some of his chief companions were also put to death. This secret and decisive retribution put the remainder of the Sheikh's adherents to flight. Ibrahim Pasha, however, continued his advance against Koornah, which he besieged closely, though without ultimate success, for three months.

At the end of this time, pacific arrangements

* See Note I.

were entered into; Yahya Agha, the minister, was deputed to accompany Ibrahim Pasha, who promised to procure an imperial rescript in favour of Hussein, which should be brought to him by Yahya.

On the departure of Ibrahim, four of the Kawawizah, viz. Ahmed ibn Mahmûd, and Ibrahim ben Ali, and two other more obscure individuals, impelled by fear and the desire of revenge, accompanied the perfidious Yahya to the foot of the Imperial throne, ostensibly to procure the confirmation of Hussein, but, in reality, to forward their individual views. In this they succeeded so well by their insidious complaints, as to procure the nomination of Yahya to the government of his master, aided by a large Turkish force to compel his submission.

The Imperial army advanced to the number, some have said, of eighty thousand Turkish troops, and reached their destination, near Basrah, on the 14th Rajab, A. H. 1078. A. D. 1657.

The opposing parties soon came to a general engagement, and the result was the complete overthrow of the Arabs, the dispersion of the survivors, and the flight of the Pasha from the field of battle. The action took place in the neighbourhood of Koorna, to which Hussein Pasha trusted in his peril; but his females were lodged in tents, on the opposite bank of the Euphrates, at Sahâb and Suâib.*

After the Turks had driven the Arabs from the field, they were under the necessity of besieging Hussein in the fort of Aliyah, so called from Ali Pasha his father, who raised this fortification for his future security, and the protection of his power, after his memorable subjugation of the district of Jezâyir.

There was previously, however, a small fortified post, called Koornah, the name of which, as appears, is preserved to this day. Hussein Pasha, after being freed from the attacks of Ibrahim Pasha, added considerably

* See Note K.

to its capabilities of defence. It is formed of three concentric fortifications, built of mud, with a considerable clear space intervening between the successive cinctures; the river washes it on two sides, and on the third a deep ditch filled from the united streams. Though it was deemed impregnable, and Hussein attempted all that the crisis demanded, and his acknowledged military talents supplied, yet, after a long and rigorous siege, he was compelled to fly. The Pasha crossed over to his family at Sahâb, followed by the disorganized remnant of his forces.

The natives of Sahâb and Suâib, alarmed at their having sheltered their chief in the vicinity of the conquering force, and knowing the sure consequence of this severe reverse of fortune, at once abandoned their dwellings and property, and fled with the utmost precipitation to Hawaizah.

On the eleventh of Ramadhân the conquerors took possession of the town of Basra; and, from the morning till the noon of Friday, put

to death four thousand individuals, and treated it as the Basrah army had formerly treated Lahsa ; when, having satisfied their vengeance, a general amnesty was proclaimed throughout the city.

Hussein, on his flight from the fort of Aliyah, proceeded directly to Dûraq ; when, leaving his family, he advanced to Shiraz, to Sulaiman, King of Persia, with the view of seeking his interference and aid to recover his power. This attempt, however, was rendered ineffectual by the malice of some of the courtiers, who had previously suffered from Hussein, and now induced the King to reject his petition. He then, with his son Ali Beg, journeyed to India, to the city of Oojain, by the monarch of which country he was entrusted with the charge of a district ; and, in defence of whose interests, both of them fell in the field of battle ; not, however, before they had been joined by the females of their family from Dûraq, whose descendants still exist there.

NOTES.

A.

THE site of the ancient city of Omar, and the portion of a wall, the remains of the Musjid, or Mosque of Ali, the nephew of Mahomet, not of Ali the Barmecide, as sometimes supposed, are to be found at the modern town of Zobair, eight miles south-west of the present Basrah. The traces of the canal of Obillah, the Apologus of Arrian and Nearchus, may yet be traced from the Euphrates, almost as far as the vicinity of Zobair.

Boraihah, is the diminutive appellation of a quarter of the town of Basrah; the last to the north-eastward dividing this from Minawi: the inhabitants are potters, mat-makers, and such poor craftsmen.

B.

Howaizah, a town of Khuzistan, and, at this time, capital of the province. It has a fort, in which only the deputy, and a garrison of the King of Persia, reside: the native governor,

and his suite are lodged without the bounds of this citadel ; the town is, however, surrounded by a fortified wall.

C.

Jezâyir, the name of an extensive district, composing many stations of importance. The first is the village of the Beni-Mansur, Bir Homaid, and Nahr Antar, which are the principal positions. It is said to be pierced by three hundred canals, among which are Nahr Saleh, Deyar Beni Asad, Deyar Beni Muhammed, Fathiyah, Kalaa, Nahr Sebaa, Batinah, Maussuriyah, Iskanderiah, Igarah, and others which we cannot enumerate. The northern boundary of this district is Kut. e. Mua.

It is inhabited by various tribes, who have successfully assisted the Imperial arms ; and, having revolted from the government of Basrah, had succeeded in establishing an independent power against the united forces of Basrah and Hawaizah. This independence was preserved, not less from the bravery of the inhabitants, than from the great difficulty of approaching their insular positions, in the broad expanse of the Euphrates, over the district in which they are situated, until the age of Ali Pasha, who reduced the country, and so broke the spirit of its population, that, from that hour, the tameness of the people of Jezâyir has become a trite proverb.

D.

Hussein Pasha was the son of Ali Pasha, son of Afrasiab, of Dair, a town north-west of Basrah, remarkable for a tower

of such colossal dimensions and beautiful structure, as to appear the work of supernatural beings.

E.

Minawi, a fort situated between Basrah and the river Euphrates; bounded on the north-west by the canal Ashar, and on the south-east by the canal of Manawi.

F.

Sarragi is one of the most flourishing crêeks in the neighbourhood of Basrah.

G.

The district of the Junub, or South, comprehends many noble canals, and populous villages and towns, between Basrah and the sea, on the south-eastern shore of the Euphrates. The successive order of the principal towns is this; commencing from Basrah, Minawi, Sarraji, Hamdan, Mahaigaran, Yusafâe, Abu 'l Khasib, Faryadhi, Nafali, Zam, Mutarowd-aat; Khist, Shabbânî, which is the last of the flourishing dependencies of Busrah.

H.

Shemâl, the north-western districts above Basrah, to a small town known by the name of Shirsh, comprehending many villages; as Robat, Maagal, Dan, Nahr Omar, and Shirsh. This district is still more flourishing than that of Júnub.

I.

The family of Kawâwizah are so named from Sheikh Muhammed Al Kawwâz, the head of a religious sect of Moham-medans in great repute in Basrah, whose mausoleum still exists in the suburbs. Sheikh Abdul-sallâm, the founder of this family, and the favourite pupil of the Sofi sage, was sur-named, from his preceptor, Kawwâz ; and transmitted a name to his posterity, which distinguishes its members at the pre-sent day. Sheikh Abdul-sallâm had a numerous posterity, among whom are the following: Muhammed, Mahmedd, Taha, Ali, Dhu-l-Kafal, Saleh, Músleh, Junard, &c.

K.

Sahâb, a place on the eastern bank of the Euphrates, near Koorna, whence caravans load and depart for Ha-waizah.

Suâib, a station with a fort of the same name, opposite to Koorna, on the eastern bank of the Euphrates, and near Sahab.

M E M O I R
ON
THE RUINS OF AHWAZ;

READ BEFORE THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY OF GREAT
BRITAIN AND IRELAND, JUNE 14, 1828; AND PRINTED
IN THE SECOND VOLUME OF THEIR TRANSACTIONS.

IT having been my intention, for some time, to visit a few of the ruined cities whose decay has converted realms to deserts, strewing them with fragments of arches and pillars, that once arose in majesty over heroic warriors, but now impede the path of the shepherd and his flocks; I set out from the shores of the Euphrates, in September 1826, for the purpose of examin-

ing the remains of the once celebrated city of Ahwâz, situated ninety-two miles (horizontal distance) north-east of Bussorah, on the banks of the noble river Karoon, in the province of Khuzistan, the ancient Susiana.

As there are only a few ruined villages, unworthy the traveller's and reader's notice, until you arrive in its immediate vicinity, I shall pass over the time that elapsed during my journey ; it is sufficient to state, that the whole country is a flat, bare, monotonous, and uncultivated waste, abandoned by its former inhabitants to rapacious animals, and to still fiercer hordes of wild and ferocious Arabs, who occasionally pitch their flying camps when in search of pasturage or plunder.

Previous to my quitting Bussorah, I procured Kinneir's Geographical Memoir of the Persian Empire, as a guide and for reference ; it being the only book I have seen, in our language, that attempts any description of Ahwâz.

Of the foundation of this city, I have it not

in my power to assign the date. Its name occurs very early in the annals of Islam. The specimens too of its architectural decorations, which I brought from the ruins, are decidedly Moslim, bearing inscriptions in no character but the early Kufic, or Arabic language; a remark equally applicable to the coins and gems usually found there; with the exception of a few small intaglios on cornelian, or Oriental onyx; the only evidences of an antiquity more remote than the era of Mohammed. All these circumstances would appear to lead to one of two conclusions; either that the remains now seen are those of a city founded by the first Khalifs of the Ommiad dynasty, or that additions had been made to the edifices already erected by the Persians, on a site antecedent to the epoch of the advance and victories of the adherents of Islam. The zenith, however, of its prosperity was attained under the earlier Khalifs of the house of Abbâs; nor did it long survive their fall.

Etymology also favours the view above

taken : Ahwâz as well as Hawaizah,* another town of Khuzistan,† are two Arabic forms of one root. The earlier name of the former, according to Abulfeda, in his Geographical tables, was *Hormuzîn Shehr*, strictly a Persian appellation ; a compound too, evidently not of modern date ; while the various districts of *Khuz*, whence *Susia* or *Cissia*, were combined under the common name *Al Ahwâz*, and their capital was designated by the Arabic term *Suq ul Ahwâz*, that is to say, the mart or emporium of *Al Ahwâz*, or of the districts.

The illustrious Arabian geographer above quoted, says, that “ Ahwâz is one of the largest districts of the province of Khûzistân.

* Hawaizah signifies a small collection of inhabitants ; the diminutive of the root *Huz*—“ People ; bodies of men.” It is also the name of a town of Susiana, of a date much subsequent to that of the city of Ahwâz ; and, like it, raised on the site of a more ancient place.

+ The Persian Dictionary, “ Borhâni Pâtâo,” under the word *Khûz*, and Khûzistân, states that these are both names of a country in Persia, of which Shuster is the capital ; and that the first signifies, also, sugar ; and the second, any country productive of the sugar-cane ; or a manufactory of this article.

The river of Ahwâz waters the shores of the city, in longitude 75° , latitude 31° , and passes westward to Asker Makrain, in longitude 76° , latitude $31^{\circ} 15'$. It nearly equals the Tigris in breadth; and its banks are adorned with gardens and pleasure-houses, and enriched by extensive plantations of sugar-cane, and other valuable productions of the vegetable kingdom.”*

According to Samaani, as stated in his Biographical and Genealogical Dictionary, its pristine fame and prosperity no longer existed, any more than its proud palaces, and learned, luxurious and wealthy citizens, in the middle of the twelfth century of our era.†

The notice of the earliest date is extracted from the *Tohfât ul Alem*; a modern work, composed for the information, and at the desire, of the celebrated Mîr Alem of Hyderâbâd, by Mir Abdul Latîf, a learned relative, and native of Shuster, the present capital of Susiana;

* *Abulfeda Taqwîn ul Bildan*; cap. de *Fluvîis*.

† *Kitâb ul Ansâb in voce Ahwâz*.

which commences with such an excellent general description of the province, that I shall submit it to my readers without farther preface or apology.

“The city of Ahwâz is one of the largest cities of the earth, and in Khuzistan; or indeed, in the other kingdoms of the world, few are to be seen equal to it in size and extent. What are now thick and impervious woods, were once extensive plantations of sugar-cane. Large vats and manufactories of sugar were also in existence; and mill-stones, and other implements of the art of the sugar-baker, are, even now, so profusely scattered over the ancient site, that it is impossible to number them.

“During the dynasty of the Abbassides, the city was at the height of its prosperity. Its extent in breadth is supposed to be forty parasangs, throughout which ruins and remains of magnificent edifices, baths, caravanseras, and mosques, are strewed. Extensive as they may appear, the inhabitants were always in litiga-

tion regarding houses and ground, as spaces sufficiently open and ample could not be had for their accommodation. These Khalifs, within whose dominions was comprehended most of the habitable world, named this city 'the source of food and of wealth;' the inhabitants of which, in their riches and luxury, excelled the rest of the world.

"The river of *Dizfûl*, a stream nearly equal in size to that of the *Kuran*, enters the latter below *Bandikir*; and here the united waters are termed the *river of Ahwâz*. The *Bund of Ahwâz* restrained their course, so that the waters completely overflowed the land, and not a drop was lost to the aid of cultivation. The intermediate country was covered with plantations of sugar-cane; and the sugar was conveyed to every part of the world, as none of foreign manufacture was then imported into the territories of Persia or Rûm.

"Thus the inhabitants became rich and luxurious, and renowned throughout the earth. As wealth, however, is the parent of pride and

insubordination, these wealthy citizens revolted from the Khalifs; until Ali ebn Muhammad, the Astrologer, surnamed 'Prince of the Zangis,' from having recruited his army among the Zangis or Nubian slaves of Khûzistân and Basrah, took the field with a powerful force, and contended for years against the monarchs of the House of Abbâs.

“ In the course of these hostilities, the people served in the ranks of one or other of the rival armies, and were swept away in numbers by the chances of war, until, in the end, the Khalifs triumphed. The rebellious spirit of the people, however, had so disgusted these princes, that they ceased to favour or embellish the city; and the remaining population, left to itself, fell into private feuds and bickerings. Anarchy and oppression ensued; the weaker fled, industry ceased, and, with it, the usual resort of commercial adventurers, and the production of wealth. The last poor remnant of this numerous, wealthy, and luxurious people abandoned, in despair, their plantations,

and the other sources of their riches and destructive pride, and sunk into desolation.

“ The ruins are covered with heaps of stone and fallen masonry ; and the inhabitants of the small modern town are repaid for their labour, in searching among the ruins, after the periodical falls of rain, by the discovery of gold and silver coins, medals, and sculptures. Several gold coins of the Abbassides were shown to me, while residing in Basrah, by an old inhabitant of Ahwâz. They bore on one side an impression, in the Kufic character, of the usual creed ; on the margin of the other, the names of the four first Khalifs ; and in the central field, the titles of *Alkâdir billah*, A. H. 381. Skeletons are not unfrequently disinterred. The heat of summer, and of the *Sammûm*, is here excessive.”*

With the exception, perhaps, of *Seistân*, no province of Persia is less known, or more worthy of investigation, than Khûzistân. To the antiquary, particularly, it presents many

* *Tohfât ul Alim in rocc Ahwâz.*

objects of interest, in the ancient remains at *Ahwáz, Shuster, Susa, and Dizfúl*. It may also put forth the additional claim of possessing the last remnant of the Chaldees and Sabæans, the oldest people upon earth,—the last depositaries, not improbably, of the earliest philosophical and theological systems of the human race ; though, less fortunately, the originators also of its most complicated mythology, and most degrading superstitions ; the professors at once of the purest notions of an undivided Godhead, and the source of the impurest heretical leaven which has deformed Judaism, Christianity, or Mohammedanism.

A considerable portion of their earliest literature is preserved ; and it is not improbable that, with competent aid, their hitherto mysterious doctrines may be satisfactorily elucidated. Major Taylor is fortunately in possession of their most important works, and of the valuable services of their Chief Priest ; and has made such progress in the language, as to have already translated some of the most

interesting chapters of their *Sidrâ Rabbâ*, or book of Scripture, entitled by the erudite and indefatigable Norbery, '*Liber Adami*.'

So far the general description of Arabian authors.—I shall now proceed to give the result of my own investigations on this interesting spot. The modern town of Ahwâz occupies but a small portion of the site of the old city on the eastern bank of the Karoon; and exhibits a mean and solitary appearance, contrasted with the immense mass of ruin that rears its rugged head behind. Its houses are built entirely of stone brought from the ruins; and it can only boast of one decent building,—a mosque apparently modern.

The population at present does not exceed sixteen hundred souls. Considerable traces are discernible of the *bund* that was thrown across the river; chiefly, if not entirely, for the purposes of irrigation. A part of the wall is still standing, remarkable for its high state of preservation; it is in many places ten feet high, and nearly as much in breadth;

while it extends upwards of one hundred feet in length, without any intermediate breach. Indeed, on examination, I found many single blocks of stone measuring eight and ten feet.

The river dashes over the *bund* with great violence, washing with its surges the stony base, and, accelerated by a strong current always running to the southward with rapidity, is projected into a fall; the sound of which is to be heard from a very great distance. Boats of every description are obliged to discharge their goods previous to an attempt at passing over; and, even then, the passage is attended with much danger. I understood that they are frequently swamped.

The Karoon is one hundred and sixty yards in breadth at each side of the dyke, and of great depth; therefore the shallowness opposite the town is caused by the great mass of masonry below the surface. The remains of this *bund* are the portions which Kinneir appears to assign to the remnants of the palace of Artabanus, the last of the Parthian kings. Upon what authority he asserts that *any palace*

was erected *across the river*, or that it was the winter residence of Artabanus, I am at a loss to discover. Kinneir also mentions that many of the excavations in the rocks bore the exact form and dimensions of a coffin: for these sepulchral recesses I looked in vain; although, towards the south end of the town, there are several singular cavities, and a few water-mills erected between the rocks; the latter probably constructed since his visit.

The remains of a bridge I found where he places it, namely, behind the town; and here too commences the whole mass of ruins, extending, at least, ten or twelve miles in a southeasterly direction; while its greatest breadth covers about half that distance. I could not find any person who had been to the end of these ruins. According to the inhabitants, their extent would occupy a journey of two months. Although this is doubtless an exaggeration, it may be as well to mention, as an hypothesis, that they extend to the neighbourhood of Ram Hormis.

All the mounds are covered with hewn stone,

burnt brick, tiles, and pottery. The first which I ascended I found nearly two hundred feet high. In many parts flights of steps are plainly discernible, in good preservation; and at the base of this mass of ruins I dug into some graves, and found stones measuring five and six feet in length. Hence it was I brought away several stones with inscriptions upon them in the Kufic character, and others with fret-work,—all indicative of an era subsequent to the Mohammedan. I likewise found some Kufic coins in gold and silver; one was nearly a thousand years old, and is as fresh in appearance as if it had been only just from the mint.

In every direction I found vast heaps of circular flat stones, perforated in the centre, apparently used for the purpose of grinding grain; though rather *colossal*, indeed, for such a purpose, as they generally measured four, five, and six feet in diameter; and some exhibited characters upon them. The above-mentioned mound varies in height and breadth, and extends so far, that my eye could not comprehend its limits: it is the first of magnitude upon the

plain. Five hundred yards to the west of this is a ruined edifice, entirely of stone, measuring fifty feet in height by twenty in breadth. Here are several flights of steps, which may, without difficulty, be traced to its summit, although they are much mutilated, and injured by exposure to the atmosphere.

About a mile to the east, separated by a deep ravine, stands an immense pile of materials, consisting of huge blocks of stone, brick, and tile of various colours. The Arabs who accompanied me, said it was the remains of a palace. Its ascent is gradual, but fatiguing from the numerous furrows which have been, apparently, worn by water in its passage. The height is, at the lowest estimate, one hundred feet from the plain below. On its summit there are many stone foundations and pavements, as fresh as if only recently laid down, together with several rounded troughs, some of which were of Persepolitan marble in its rough state.

From numerous caverns we started large troops of jackals; and I picked up a number of porcupine quills. I found it impossible to

descend on the opposite side, the face being nearly perpendicular, and exhibiting many frightful chasms. At the base of this pile, the camel's-thorn sprang up luxuriantly, and considerably relieved the landscape, the general dreariness and sterility of which were gloomy beyond all conception.

This ruin is about three miles from the eastern bank of the river. Proceeding onwards for eight hundred yards, in a northerly direction, a conical mound is very conspicuous : its circumference is six hundred feet : the sides exhibit the remains of walls nine feet in thickness. At its foundation, I traced a beautiful wall of masonry for twenty-one feet, which, without doubt, formed the front of some building, finely executed, and very little injured by time : it joins another ruined heap, covered with vestiges and fragments of glazed tile, a coarse kind of crystal, pieces of alabaster, and bits of glass.

Fifty yards in a direct line east, seven square stone cisterns, sixteen feet long, and proportionably deep, are still to be seen, highly polished internally, and in a perfect state. These

remains of ancient splendour throw a mournful shade over the desolate scene. Six or seven aqueducts are to be traced from a ravine, which probably conducted the water to these cisterns.

Several mounds of masonry form one connected chain of rude, unshapen, flaked rock, lying in such naturally-formed strata, that the very idea that any part of the materials had been accumulated by human labour, from a distant site, is scarcely admissible. The soil on which these ruins rest is peculiarly soft and sandy: the country does not become rocky until the immediate vicinity of Shushter; and even water-carriage thence is attended with considerable toil and expense. Yet the height of these mountainous ruins and misshapen masses induces me to think, that the site must have been by nature elevated at the time the city was built; although, from the flatness of the surrounding country, I should be inclined to oppose such a conjecture; more particularly as there are no mountains between the Shut-ul-Arab and the Bucktiari chain, which is seen hence running N.W. and S.E.

Let me not be supposed to exaggerate, when I assert that these piles of ruin, irregular, craggy, and in many places inaccessible, *rival* in appearance those of the Bucktiari, and are discernible from them, and for nearly as many miles in an opposite direction.

It is a singular fact, that almost every mound I passed over was strewed with shells of different sorts and sizes. I observed them also on the water's edge, along the banks of the Karoon : we may therefore suppose, that at some former period, the river, or more probably canals from it, flowed through the city. Glass, of all colours, is equally abundant ; and fragments of alabaster and pottery are remarkably fresh.

Many of the kiln-burnt bricks that lie on the surface of the mounds, appear once to have borne some written character ; but exposure to the weather, and probably occasional inundations caused by the melting snows of the adjacent mountains, have nearly effaced all traces of it ; though, as I have already mentioned, the character on the hewn stone is as clear and plain, as if only just from the sculptor's hands.

No bitumen was observable on the bricks ; a circumstance I much regretted, as it would have afforded a strong proof in favour of the antiquity of the spot. I however met with several small intaglios, generally denominated *seals*, and probably used as such ; similar to those found at Hamadân, Nineveh, and Babylon.* The round perforated stones that I have alluded to, must, from the Arabian accounts already quoted, have belonged to sugar manufactories. Their numbers are countless. I followed them for a great distance in successive rows, in small dry rivulets ; resting so firmly together, that it would have occupied the labour of several days to have removed any of them.

The Arabs are always digging up and removing stones, for the purposes of building ; yet their expenditure has been nothing when compared to the vast quantities of stone and brick that are scattered about. Perhaps they have excavated a space of three hundred yards,

* The villagers assured me they had procured many engraved gems when digging for bricks ; and that the Jews purchased them at good prices, to sell to the *Faringheez*.

but certainly to no greater extent, which is a proof how abundant the hewn stone is, for there is not a house in the town built of any other material. I am convinced, that as large a city as any now existing, might be erected from the ruins that I saw. I was prevented examining many mounds of great magnitude, that extend to the verge of the horizon, from not being able to prevail upon any one to accompany me. The Sheikh, it appears, did not deem it safe to permit me to penetrate far into the desert.

The ruins of Ahwâz extend likewise, for a considerable distance, on the western bank of the river, in a northerly direction, and exhibit the same appearance as the mounds on the eastern side; though the former are not to be compared with these in point of magnitude. The *bund* that was thrown across, seems to have nearly connected the city together; but, as there is abundant room for conjecture, and much ground for idle supposition, it is better, and wiser, merely to state what is visible: this I have attempted to do; though, perhaps, with

a feeble pen. Nevertheless, whatever opinions may be entertained regarding this once famous capital of a flourishing province, we must concur in ranking it lower, in point of antiquity, than either Persepolis or Susa—to say nothing of the “mighty Babylon”—or, how could we persuade ourselves, that Alexander the Great, strict and attentive in observation, as enterprising and successful in war, should have navigated the Karoon, and have made no mention of the city, when comparatively insignificant towns attracted his notice? I repeat, it is my firm conviction, that this city, now one vast heap of ruins, was erected long since the days of that illustrious warrior.

I cannot refrain here from observing how much we have to regret, that the able and ingenious author of the Geographical Memoir on Persia should not more minutely have investigated and described the ruins of this city; particularly as he informs us, that he was encamped six months on the banks of the Karoon.

From the above description, though inadequate to convey a just and accurate idea of

the extent and magnitude of these ruins, it will be seen how worthy they are of a diligent investigation, and what a favourable opportunity was lost by Kinneir, who was travelling under the *immediate auspices* of the Ambassador,—a circumstance, in itself, peculiarly calculated to secure a due degree of attention and protection from the natives of the district.

To conclude, it must ever be a subject of deep regret, that the difficulty of exploring the remains of any spot of antiquity should be heightened by the passions of a people disposed to turbulence and riot. The desolation which, under the influence of a barbarous Government, has for years been advancing over Susiana, one of the finest provinces of the East, whether as regards soil and climate, or the facilities of commercial intercourse, irresistibly impresses on the mind the mutability of earthly dignity.

BABYLONIAN WRITING.

IN a preceding page of this work, I have cursorily adverted to the characters stamped upon the Babylonian bricks. I may be permitted to say a few words upon this undeciphered writing. This character is known by the names of cuneiform, nail-headed, arrow-headed, as descriptive of its shape ; and Babylonian, or Persepolitan, according to the sites where it has been discovered.. Inscriptions in this character have been found upon the sides of mountains and monuments, at the greatest and oldest cities of the East—Hamadan, the ancient Ecbatana, Susa, Van, Persepolis, Nakshi-Roustam, Murgaub, the ancient Pasagardæ, Babylon, and Nineveh : and as this style of writing is found in all these places, we cannot but be fully convinced, that it is the primeval character of the most ancient people in the world.

The inscriptions upon the bricks found at ancient Babylon have a remarkable resemblance to those that are engraved upon the pillars and columns at Persepolis ; a circumstance which proves a very near affinity between these two most ancient nations, and affords a strong additional argument for the high antiquity of those superb and splendid remains.

That learned and indefatigable antiquarian, M. Grotefend, when speaking of this character, observes, that the elementary forms of the cuneiform writing are only two, the wedge and the angle, being devoid of curves. The general direction of the wedges, are with their points downwards, or towards the right, either in perpendicular, horizontal, or sloping positions. The rectangles have always one direction, their opening being turned towards the right. These characteristics show how an inscription ought to be held, and mark that it follows a horizontal, and not a perpendicular line. The strokes so frequently drawn between the rows of characters sufficiently show this rule : though there are exceptions, in compliance with any peculiar form on the tablet of the inscription ; for instance, on small cylinders, where the letters appear in an upright column.

There are three kinds of these letters, all of which are to be seen at Persepolis, and Susa, on every piece of sculpture where an inscription is exhibited ; and then it is repeated three times, each repetition being in one of the three different species of character, though all of the same genus. The three species of cuneiform, or arrow-headed writing, are

distinguished by the greater or less multiplying of the two fundamental forms, and also their positions. The first contains the greatest mingling of the fundamental forms; the second shows more horizontal wedges, and fewer angles than the first, and differs from the third by possessing fewer sloping wedges, and none that cross each other. The third exhibits more sloping wedges than the second, and also admits their crossing. All the cuneiform inscriptions of Persia are much less complicated than those on the Babylonian bricks and tablets.

From the result of these observations, it appears that the characters are alphabetical, and to be read, like our own, from *left to right*. Mr. Price, in his dissertation upon the antiquities of Persepolis, remarks—"From what has come under my notice, I have reason to think there are still books that have been preserved by the learned or curious, from high antiquity down to the present time, which books might contain historical or other tradition in the Sabea character: the arrow-head, I should suppose, was confined to sculpture, or grave subjects, and seldom used in manuscripts. But, after all, it amounts to the same, whether a letter or word be formed with arrow-heads, minims, or other strokes; the powers would be the same in either, if the writing were not so ornamental in one shape, as it might be in the other.

"The Pahlavi alphabet was introduced into Persia by the Magi, for religious purposes; some of its letters were at first partly modelled from the Sabea characters; but in the course

of time the primitive forms changed, and little of the Sabeian remained in them. Notwithstanding the Sabeian alphabet was nearly abandoned by the Persians, the greater part of its letters have continued in use among other nations, by being adopted in their alphabets. There seems to have been a very early intercourse between the Hebrews, the Syrians, the Persians, and the Tartars, if one may judge by analogy of words and signs in common to their primitive languages, and by some of their alphabets."

There are various opinions with respect to the origin of writing; but I believe no one has ever succeeded in producing sufficient proof as to what age it was discovered in, nor who was the inventor of this useful art. It is not unlikely that writing was known to the inhabitants before the Flood, because the arts must have attained to perfection among such an immense population as had spread itself over the face of the earth, during an interval of more than two thousand years from the creation.

The Antediluvians may not only have excelled in most of the arts known to us, but in many that sank with the people to rise no more. After the Deluge, those arts most connected with personal comfort and convenience, would be the first used and improved. Building, one of the first, must have been brought to considerable perfection when the Tower of Babel was commenced; but the folly of the people, in their vain attempt to carry it up to Heaven, proves that philosophy and astronomy had made no great figure among them at that time, though the inferior arts may have attained to

perfection. Their method of burning bricks has perhaps never since been equalled.

Some foundations have been discovered at Babylon, which, from their thickness and depth in the earth, are allowed, by men of judgment, to be part of the foundations of the Tower of Babel. The bricks are square, and not unlike floor-bricks : some of them have come under my inspection ; each has a stamp upon it, containing characters which have some resemblance to those of the Persepolitan. This circumstance might lead us to suppose the Antediluvians may have used the same sort of characters. These bricks, being in the foundations, must have been moulded previous to the confusion of tongues ; therefore if the words they contain were deciphered, they would elucidate the question, as to which among the number that came from Babel, was the Antediluvian language ; or, in the general confusion, whether no entire remains of it were left.

Some may consider the Hebrew to have been the primitive tongue, because it was used by the chosen people ; some may plead for the Sanscrit, on the ground that Sanscrit words are found in every language on earth ; while others may support the Chinese, for its paucity of sounds and its simplicity of construction. But, after all arguments that can be adduced on the subject, the conclusion rests entirely on conjecture and uncertainty.

The order of the Sabean alphabet agrees nearly with that of the Hebrew ; but whether the Hebrew borrowed its order of the Sabean, or the Sabean of the Hebrew, is a point I am

not able to decide ; but, judging from comparison, I think it is likely the Hebrew borrowed its alphabet and order from the Sabean, because a few of its letters have an affinity to some of the Sabean letters. The Sabean bordering on the shape of the Persepolitan, which having an affinity to the Babylonian, renders it possible that the Persepolitan may be derived from the Babylonian alphabet, which is the highest antiquity we can trace.

“The instrument that forms the basis of all the letters or characters in the Persepolitan inscriptions, is the head of an arrow—to a martial people, one of the most familiar objects. There is a singular coincidence in some of the Persepolitan numerals, in common with the Roman and Chinese ; the letter \triangleleft formed of two arrow-heads joined together obliquely, represents the letter H ; which letter, being the fifth of the Sabean, as well as of the Hebrew alphabet, represents the number five ; and so in the Persepolitan : change the position of it, and you have the Roman V, the numeral for five. Two of these placed together, form the letter X, the Roman numeral for ten ; the same in Persepolitan and in Chinese. There is another coincidence with regard to the letters *a* and *m*, which can scarcely be the effect of accident ; the letters *a* and *m* rather appear to have been derived from the Persepolitan alphabet.

It is useless, however, in this place, wandering farther into a wilderness of conjecture, without any hope of penetrating into the real origin of an art which is lost in the abyss of time ; and which, if not invented by Moses, the

presumed author of the book of Job, we are utterly at a loss to know to whom to ascribe the wonderful discovery.

NOTE.—“The ordinary buildings were constructed of bricks, *baked in the sun only*; these were in their nature loose and friable, and easily reduced to their original elements. The walls and public edifices in general consisted of bricks *burned in the furnace*; these, being hard and durable, were carried away for the purpose of constructing Seleucia, Ctesiphon, Bagdad, Bussora, and all the other great cities that rose to eminence upon the decline of Babylon. When, in addition to all this, it is considered that this same system of depredation has been going on for above 2000 years, in a country which, from its situation, has ever been the favourite region for the erection of great cities by the successive tyrants of Asia, and yet that such immense masses of them, as described by recent travellers, should still remain in the neighbourhood of Hillah, it must excite his wonder, that, instead of the enormous heaps of ruins described in their pages, any remains at all of the Babylonian capital should at this day exist.”—*Appendix to Observations on the Ruins of Babylon: by the Rev. Thomas Maurice*, pp. 200, 201 4to.

NOTE.—“We may be permitted to conjecture, that the Euphrates once pursued a course different from that which it now follows, and that it flowed between the pyramid of *Haroot* and *Maroot*, and the mound and ruins already mentioned as half a mile farther to the west. The present course of the river would appear to justify this conclusion;

for it bends suddenly towards these mounds, and has the appearance of having formerly passed between them. Should this conjecture be admitted, then will the ruins just mentioned be found to answer the description given by the ancients of the materials, size, and situation of the two principal edifices in Babylon."—*Kinneir's Geographical Memoir of the Persian Empire*, page 279.

AN ITINERARY,
FROM BUSSORAH TO THE CITY OF TABREEZ,
OR TAURIS,
By SEMAVAH, MESHED ALI, KUFA, HILLAH, BAGDAD,
AND SULIMANIAH,
PERFORMED BY THE AUTHOR IN THE SUMMER OF 1828.

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ITINERARY.

FROM BUSSORAH TO BAGDAD.

QUIT the modern city of Bussorah, or Basrah, by the
Zobeir Gate.

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| 1. | 30. | Over a barren desert, pass some watch-towers on the left, and also a pretty tomb. |
| — | 15. | See the ruins of Old Basrah. |
| — | 5. | On an eminence to the left, a very ancient lofty pillar, and projecting wall, being the remains of the Musjed of Ali, the nephew of Mohammed. Keppel has erroneously stated this ruin to be the mosque of Ali <i>the Barmecide</i> . Right, a tamarisk and well. |
| — | 5. | Observe the remains of old Mohammedan foundations and pavements, and cross the dry bed of a canal. |
| — | 5. | The clean town of Zobeir. |

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| H. | M. | |
| — | 30. | Cross an aqueduct in good preservation. |
| — | 15. | Vestiges of wall, and a bastion of the old city. |
| 35. | — | The town of Sooksheook, standing on the western bank of the Euphrates, over a dreary, bladeless, flat desert, without a single undulation of surface, and no water. The plain being elevated only fifteen feet above the level of the river, it is in autumn overflowed, and impassable for horsemen. Sooksheook is inhabited by the Montefik Arabs. Until lately it was the Northern limit of the powerful Sheikh of Montefidge, whose control now extends to Semavah. The inhabitants of Sooksheook breed and export some of the finest |
| 30. | — | horses in Irâk. |
| | | The large village of Semavah, on the river's bank. Country still uncultivated. The male inhabitants of this town are extremely tall and hideous; the females, beautiful, and much secluded. |
| 2. | — | Cross from Irâk into Mesopotamia, by the Euphrates, which is here nearly fordable, and only fifty yards broad. Its bed is drained to irrigate this part of Mesopotamia, which is covered with the richest pasturage, on a soil producing all the necessities of life. Its innumerable canals communicate with a river so happily situated, as to command a ready commerce with all the towns on the Euphrates and Tigris; and its countless villages, surrounded by water, and luxuriantly shaded by thick shrubberies, are very thickly |

- II. M. peopled by the Khezâil Arabs, who are civil and hospitable to strangers.
6. — The deserted town of Romaheyyeh, cut by the Euphrates, which is near this one hundred yards wide. The dead bodies from Lemloon are here conveyed over in Kooffahs, on their way to Messhed Ali.
4. — The village of Sorah, on the western side of the river. Plantations of tobacco. Country, flat, dreary, and uninteresting.
12. — The old, decayed city of Kufa, founded by Omar. Four miles to the westward, Messhed Ali stands conspicuous. It is governed by a Zabit, who is subject to the Pasha of Bagdad; and yields a great annual revenue, exacted of those who journey hither, as well as by the dead who are brought from every part of Asia.—The usage of disposing of the corpses deserves notice. Those relatives who can only afford a limited donation for the supposed salvation of the departed, are looked upon disreputably; and the defunct is, in consequence, thrown headlong into a deep well dug for the purpose; but those whose offerings are liberal, can get their dead easily interred; until others, equally rich, and ambitious for a sacred spot, arrive; then the remains of the first are removed from its grave, and cast into the well, to make room for those of the second.—The natives here are very jealous and uncivil to strangers. The author has reason to remember the

- н. м. place, as he was unceremoniously attacked, and nearly shot ; it was only upon his invoking the protection of Ali, that he was permitted to continue his journey.

Over an ugly desert extends a succession of mounds composed of the usual vestiges of brick, tile, &c. some of which are of considerable elevation. These ruins stretch to within two miles of the western boundary of the site of Babylon.

8. — The town of Hillah, situated upon the banks of the Euphrates, and occupying a part of the site of ancient Babylon.
- 12 — The city of Bagdad. Already described, and governed by a Pashaw of three tails. The rate of travelling this journey may be averaged at four miles an hour.
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109. 45.
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BAGDAD TO SULIMANIAH.

The population of Bagdad is at present estimated at sixty thousand souls.

Quit Bagdad by a gate at the North, and proceed in that direction, through much cultivation, with the Tigris, and many rich productive gardens on the left.

1. — Pass the remains of the lines thrown up by Nader Shah, in the year A. D. 1735, on the Persians besieging the seat of the Caliphs.

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| 5. | — The village of Howesh, situated upon the banks of the river, amidst a thick palm-tree wood. In the month of June, the richness and luxuriance of the country were remarkably striking. |
| 2. | — A poor village in the midst of a date-grove. |
| — | 30. Cross the dry bed of a canal. |
| — | 25. Cross a very deep canal. |
| 1. | — Extensive masses of earth, brick, and tile, evidently indicating the remains of a town. The whole is surrounded by a deep moat. General direction of the road, N. 50° E. |
| 2. | — Cross a very broad and tortuous canal: the country flat and uninteresting. Road due E. |
| 1. | 25. The ruined, uninhabited village of Delli-Abbas, called by the Arabs <i>Guntarah</i> , from a decaying causeway on the spot, spanning a branch of the river Diala, or Pasitigris. Two miles to the right is a considerable group of mounds. |
| 2. | — Commence ascending the Hamrine mountains: the roads unusually rugged. |
| 2. | — Descend into an immense oval plain, and cross a kind of island surrounded by ditches, which only contain water after rain, or at the season of increase. At a distance on the left is a good brick bridge of six arches, built by Ali Pasha several years ago. |
| 4. | — Traverse the plain, which is swampy, in a direction N. 10° E. and reach the village of Kara uppa, situated beneath a chain of hills. |

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| — | 10. Cross a stream, said by the natives to be a branch of the Diala. |
| — | 5. Ascend bleak and barren hills, over a stony road. |
| — | 45. Descend into a plain. |
| 1. | — Cross an old bridge. |
| — | 5. Cross a torrent bed. |
| 3. | — The small but pretty town of Kifri, at the entrance of a ridge of rocky mountains. |
| 2. | — Cross bare, ugly, and sulphureous mountains. Twelve miles hence are naphtha springs, and about twenty miles off are salt mines. |
| 4. | — A tomb on the left. Road E. |
| — | 15. Cross the bed of a river, and pass a deserted hamlet. Cross a mountain torrent. |
| 12. | — The village of Dolân, over a singularly wild, romantic, and mountainous district, infested by Koordish tribes, who are under no subjection whatever; the country is finely clothed with forests of oak, and walnut-trees. |
| — | 15. Ascend a most difficult and fatiguing pass. |
| 1. | 30. A village on the brink of a tremendous precipice. |
| | 5. Descend a very abrupt chasm. |
| 2. | 5. Pass over an undulating, well cultivated country, consisting of pretty insulated elevations, separated by small plains, and watered by clear meandering brooks, with little scattered hamlets, beautifully shaded by cherry and other trees. The whole is surrounded by lofty mountains. |

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— | M. | 5. Sulimaniah, the capital of Koordistan, standing in the centre of an amphitheatre of mountains, called the Sharizool (the ancient Siozuros) chain, was built by Suliman Pasha, of Bagdad. Mahmoud Pasha, its present governor, is nominally under the authority of the Bagdad government, although the revenue is reaped by the Persian. The city contains eight thousand inhabitants; but the Pasha's officers pretend that they amount to fifteen thousand, nearly all of whom are Koords. The traveller will find a good lodging in the house of M. Morandi, an Italian doctor, who is much attached to the English. The time occupied from Dolan to this city, cannot convey an idea of the distance, the greater part of the road being very rugged and difficult to pass. The usual rate of travelling through Koordistan is about four miles an hour. |
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48. 55.

SULIMANIAH TO TABREEZ.

Proceed, on quitting the capital of southern Koordistan, in an easterly direction, over a stony road and stupendous mountains, crossing at intervals small torrents, which form pretty cascades, and give the rocks a fine polish by their action. In the ravines, between the mountains, are shady shrubberies of apple, pear, cherry, walnut, mulberry, oak, and

- H. M. poplar trees, encompassed by vines growing in the greatest luxuriance, and watered by murmuring brooks.
8. — The village of Shamalah, situated in a ravine between the mountains.
- 10. A stream with many dark-coloured snakes.
The appearance of the mountains becomes extremely beautiful; their verdant peaked summits and sloping sides are covered with oak-trees; and much cultivation is here apparent.
- 50. Cross a river running west, through a rocky chasm, into a small triangular plain, at a little distance from the road.
2. — A forest of oak-trees.
1. — Descend into a plain.
2. — The village of Bostan.
Continue in a northerly direction, across a circular valley, through which a stream playfully meanders in a direction east and west.
- 15. Ascend a very steep range of hills. The country uncultivated, and covered with low bushes.
- 45. A thick wood. The road runs due north.
1. — A very difficult descent into an oblong plain.
5. — The small town of Banna, situated in a pretty plain beneath the mountains. The population is Koor-dish, amounting to one thousand souls, under the *walee* of Sennah.
2. — The road winds east, through a valley well cultivated with grain.

H. M.

- 15. A village at the front of a range of hills, the inhabitants of which are a mixture of Koords and Persians. The road turns abruptly to the left, or north. There is likewise a road to Sauk Bullak, or the cold springs, as its name implies. This route is infested by a band of lawless Koords, who have always evinced a habit of defiance and resistance to the Turkish and Persian governments. The author encountered a party of this uncivilized horde, who attacked him and his guards so violently with spears, that in self-defence they were compelled to use their pistols, and in a few minutes unhorsed three of their assailants, who were left for dead.

The road leads over a strata of rock, which is very difficult to pass.

2. — Enter a gorge in the mountains, upon whose summits are patches of snow; and follow the course of a torrent.
8. — A poor village in a cultivated plain, surrounded by conical hills. Cross an ugly plain in a north-easterly direction.
- 15. A village upon an eminence to the left of the road.
- 15. Another, upon a hill. The country now becomes more level, and the road much pleasanter.
- 30. Cross a stream, the water of which is almost absorbed in the irrigation of the plain.
4. — A chain of hills on the right, at whose base the road winds. On the left, a river runs parallel with the road.

H. M.

3. — Observe the remains of a stone dyke erected across a river which runs into the Lake Ouroomia. Quit the bank of the river, and proceed over a large barren plain.
2. — The town of Miundow in the plain. Here are three mosques, two caravanserais, and a well-supplied bazaar. According to the estimated distance of the natives, Lake Ouroomia is about ten hours' journey to the left, or north. The course of the road N. 30° E. by compass.
4. — A straggling village at the extremity of the plain.
- 10. Ascend some hills.
- 20. A distant view of Lake Ouroomia, over an uninteresting plain.
2. — Descend into a valley, and cross a bridge over a rapid stream.
- 30. Enter the large town of Bonow, or Binaub, standing in the midst of verdant meadows, rich orchards, and smiling gardens, affording abundance of fruit of every kind. On the east, a lofty range of mountains bounds the view, which is extremely beautiful.
- 15. Ascend from the town, by a steep road running along the foot of the mountains on the right. Nine miles distant on the left, the north-eastern shore of the lake interrupts the view of cloud-capped heights.
7. — After a very long and tedious defile, a gradual descent into a plain. The lake about two miles distant.

H. M.

- 30. A small hamlet embosomed in gardens. Proceed along a partially cultivated plain, over a stony road, with the hills on the right, in a direction N. 30° E.
5. — A large village.
2. — Enter Tabreez, or Tauris, the capital of Azerbijan, the ancient Antropatia, and residence of his Royal Highness Abbas Mirza, heir apparent to the Persian throne.
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LIST OF JOURNEYS

PERFORMED BY THE AUTHOR IN THE YEARS 1826, 1827, 1828.

1. From Bussorah to the ruins of Ahwâz, in Khuzistan, the ancient Susiana.
2. From Bussorah to the ruins of Shapour, by Bushire, Kauzeroon and Shiraz.
3. From Bussorah to Babylon, by Bagdad and Hillah.
4. From Bussorah to Seleucia, and Ctesiphon, by the Tigris.
5. From Bussorah to Bagdad, by Irâk Arabia, Ul Jezira, and Mesapotamia.
6. From Bagdad to Erbill, the ancient Arbella.
7. From Bagdad to the ruins of Nineveh, by Kerkouk, the ancient Corcura, vel Demetrius.
8. From Bagdad to Tauris, the capital of Azerbijan, by Sulimaniah and Lake Ouroomia.
9. From Tauris to Tiflis, the capital of Georgia.
10. From Tiflis to St. Petersburg, by Caucasus, Novo-Tcherkask, Tula, and Moscow.
11. From St. Petersburg to Lubec, Hamburg, and London.

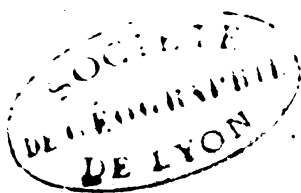
THE END.

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A
WINTER JOURNEY
TO
KOORDISTAUN.

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VOL. I.

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GOUGH SQUARE.





Kasrou Mirza

WINTER JOURNEY

THROUGH

RUSSIA, THE CAUCASIAN ALPS,
AND GEORGIA; *etc*

THENCE

ACROSS MOUNT ZAGROS, BY THE PASS OF XENOPHON
AND THE TEN THOUSAND GREEKS, INTO

KOORDISTAUN.

By CAPTAIN R. (MIGNAN,)

OF THE BOMBAY ARMY, M.R.A.S.

AUTHOR OF "TRAVELS IN CHALDEA."

IN TWO VOLUMES.

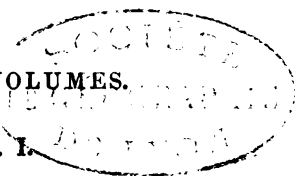
VOL. I.

LONDON:

RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET,

Publisher in ordinary to Her Majesty.

1839.



TO

HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF ROXBURGHE,

&c. &c. &c.

AS

A TOKEN OF THE HIGHEST RESPECT,

THESE VOLUMES

ARE, WITH PERMISSION, DEDICATED,

BY

HIS GRACE'S OBLIGED AND GRATEFUL SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.





PREFACE.



A JOURNEY through Russia, and over the Caucasian Alps into Koordistaun, during the very depth of winter, has not I believe been often accomplished.

At the hospitable palace of Prince Galitzin, Governor-general of Moscow, I had the good fortune to meet the Baron Humboldt just as that philosophic traveller had returned from his highly interesting journey to the Ural mountains; and by his suggestion I resolved to pass through those unfrequented provinces lying on the western shore of the Caspian, formerly tributary to Persia, but more recently ceded to Russia, and now forming a part of that huge empire. Thence I struck into Koordistaun, a country which,

although entrenched within the two most powerful monarchies of the east, still preserves the impress of distinct nationality.

All classical authors have given to Koordistaun the name of "Carducia," and the illustrious Rennell considered it to represent that portion of Assyria which Scriptural History has denominated "Kir." Turkey and Persia claim dominion over some parts of Koordistaun; but this is mere pretence, the Koords being nothing more than the allies of those kingdoms when circumstances induce them to furnish cavalry for defence or aggression, and happy are they to profit by their heroism when thus led into the field of plunder.

The indifference hitherto felt towards the Koords, has prevented our giving any attention to their domestic state, an acquaintance with which can alone enable us to estimate the condition of this people. And yet, if a race has preserved in the very centre of two

such powerful and despotic states, its thorough independence, it is extraordinary (though remoteness and insecurity may have interposed many difficulties) that the people still continue so imperfectly known, more particularly as Koordistaun has been the theatre of some of the most important events that history has chronicled. The retreat of the ten thousand Greeks under Xenophon, after the defeat and death of Cyrus, at the battle which overthrew the Persian Empire, bears ample testimony to the unyielding spirit of the Koords, who remain unchanged to this very day.

In the greater portion of these volumes, I have endeavoured to delineate what appeared to be worthy of notice on my visit to Koordistaun, and the appearance of the work at a time when so much attention is directed towards the Eastern horizon, may, perhaps, render it interesting to the public.

R. M.

LONDON,
January 1st, 1839.



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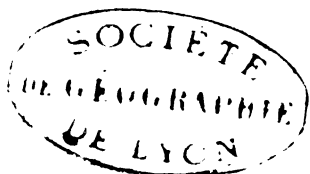
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A

WINTER JOURNEY,

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CHAPTER I.

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I LEFT England in the autumn of the year 1829, on my return to my military duties in Western India, by the way of Russia, accompanied by my lady, our two children, and servants; and, after a very rough passage across the North Sea, in one of the smallest steamers belonging to the General Steam Navigation Company of Lon-

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B

don, we entered the Elbe, and were safely landed in the good town of Hamburgh, in about seventy-two hours from London Bridge. We sojourned at the Hotel Belvidere for two days, when Mrs. Mignan's relative, Mr. Charles Parish, having obligingly given us the use of his carriage and box at the Opera, we were afforded the opportunity of witnessing the performance of Deshayes' celebrated ballet of "Masaniello, the fisherman of Naples."

Winter being on the advance, we were compelled to be particular in timing our departure hence, so as to reach Lubeck and Travemunde at the moment fixed by Captain Black for the sailing of his steamer, the "George the Fourth," it being her last trip for the season.

The road over which we travelled to the shores of the Baltic would have tried the patience and talents of Macadam to a greater degree than any piece of ground throughout the whole of Europe: the springs of our britzka must have been of the finest *matériel* and workmanship, or they would inevitably

have failed us, for my flute (one of Charles Nicholson's best instruments) was split asunder from the ill usage it sustained, although carefully bound, and packed within the lid of my portmanteau.

The "George the Fourth" was decidedly the finest steamer on which I ever embarked, not excepting the splendid "Berenice" of Bombay; and with her engines of immense power, was calculated in a superlative degree, to buffet the tempestuous weather usually met with in such high latitudes. We averaged daily two hundred and twenty miles by the log, which soon brought us alongside the English street, bordering that *fluvius fluviorum*, the magnificent Neva.

Through the kindness of Lord Heytesbury, our ambassador at the Court of St. Petersburg, to whom I conveyed letters of introduction from his Lordship's relatives in England, I heard that the Persian Prince Khosrou Mirza, the envoy extraordinary from the Shah of Persia to the Emperor of "all the Russias," was on the eve of re-

turning to Teheraun. I immediately resolved to solicit permission to accompany his excellency, which solicitation was speedily granted through the medium of our fellow traveller Doctor Cormick, who held the appointment of principal physician to his royal highness Abbas Mirza.

Prince Khosrou was the fifth son of Abbas Mirza, by a Khoi woman of inferior rank and family in Persia. He was about three-and-twenty years of age, of middle stature, and, like all Persians, possessed great *politesse Française*, and much sprightliness and *naïveté* in conversation. Futteh-Ali-Shah, his august grandfather, had selected him from among at least fifty other young princes, to conduct a most difficult mission, in which he succeeded to a miracle. He was directed to soften the exasperation, and to explain away the causes, which led to the barbarous massacre of M. Gribeyadoff, the Russian ambassador extraordinary, at the court of his Persian Majesty, and, save one solitary individual, (Monsieur Maltzoff),

his whole retinue. This awful and tragical occurrence happened at Teheraun in February, 1829. His Majesty of Persia was nearly being added to the number of victims, in his zeal to save the Ambassador, and his endeavours to appease the fury of the populace. M. Gribeyadoff had sheltered a Georgian woman, who claimed his protection on the plea of being a native of a country now under the domination of Russia. Her husband (a Persian) had threatened to put her to death, suspecting she carried on an intrigue with a Christian attached to the Embassy. The case had been investigated by the Kazi, who pronounced the woman "guilty," and the infuriated husband having unsuccessfully demanded his wife, excited the inhabitants of the city, who rushed forth exclaiming, "Are these Christian dogs to be allowed to spit on our beards, and defile our women also?" They to a man rushed to the envoy's residence, and in a few minutes not one stone was left standing upon another!

On the 21st of October we landed on the

noble quay, called, *par excellence*, the “English Quay” of the “Imperial Residence” of St. Petersburg. The first fall of snow had occurred that morning—no very agreeable circumstance for us, that winter had actually set in the very day of our arrival in a country through which we had so long a journey to perform. As the choice of carriages at Moscow was greater than in St. Petersburg, and the prices in the former city much less than the latter, our excellent consul-general, Sir Daniel Bayley, advised us to delay suiting ourselves with one until we should arrive there; so we engaged the whole of the mail-coach for the sum of seven hundred roubles, or twenty pounds sterling.

Previously to our quitting St. Petersburg, we visited the magnificent botanic garden with Lady Bayley, which is under the superintendence of Dr. Fischer, to whom I conveyed introductory letters from my most esteemed friend Mr. Lambert, of Boyton, one of the most eminent botanists in Europe. The conservatory extended nearly four thousand

feet in length, and we actually walked for three quarters of a mile under glass. We saw a collection of ten thousand species, which comprised nearly sixty thousand specimens of southern plants. The banana (*Musa paradasiaca*) had attained the height of fourteen feet, and the *Hedysarum gyrans* was of considerable size. Dr. Fischer told me that one cactus (*cactus melonoeidea*) had cost forty pounds, and that the government had been most liberal in all their purchases. It was curious to see the whole vegetable world of the equator transferred to the polar circle, and blooming in luxuriance amidst the ice and snows of this inhospitable climate.

We found the mode of travelling sufficiently expeditious, but the filth at the inns baffles all description. It was utterly impossible to pick one's footsteps through the passages of any one of them.

Our surprise was great to find that wherever we stopped, either to change horses, or to obtain refreshment, the same carriage met

our view; in fact, the whole way from St. Petersburg to Moscow, this self-same carriage was either "close a-head or a-stern of us." At the last stage, however, of our journey, while at breakfast, the hitherto unseen occupant of the calèche introduced himself to my lady, and entered into a conversation on general subjects in French, requesting permission to call upon us at Moscow, to which we of course assented, not knowing how, or why to refuse him. The following morning our new acquaintance had little difficulty in finding out our residence, as we "put up" at the only good English establishment there, kept by a Mrs. Howard, who, upon the mysterious stranger taking his departure, came hastily into our sitting-room quite pale, and tremblingly exclaimed—

"Do you know who General Bibikoff is?" Our reply was of course in the negative. "He is no less a personage," she added, "than the head of the secret police; indeed, I never thought I should have seen him in my house—I feel quite alarmed!" We entered

into the poor woman's feelings, who could not have spent so many years in Russia without entertaining a dread, and even a horror, of every thing connected with a "secret police."

On the morrow, General Bibikoff called again, and made a still longer stay, being much interested in the causes which could induce us to undertake such a perilous journey at so inclement a season; when, as he remarked, he did not believe there was one Russian family in the empire who would risk it, and he concluded by gallantly offering to escort us to Tiflis! His numerous questions and curiosity were answered by simple fact, to which, nevertheless, he, with all his *galanterie* and *politesse*, could not disguise his incredulity; for the idea, of a lady with two such very young children voluntarily enduring such fatigues and privations, without an adequate object in view, was, as he himself expressed it, the most extraordinary thing he had ever heard of, knowing, as he said he did, that we had

such beautiful ships to take us to India, with every comfort for ladies and children.

Upon his third visit, feeling that the great interest he expressed for us was not at all desirable, I fear I evinced too much John Bullism in my manner towards him; at least, my wife declared I had growled like a dog when displeased with those about him. It appears he then pursued the course which in the first instance he should have done; namely, inquired of Prince Galitzin, the governor-general, if he knew the object that brought us in contact with the Persian envoy. He, I imagine, must have given him the most satisfactory reply to his queries, for we were never afterwards troubled with his presence. If we had not had letters of introduction to Prince Galitzin, it is more than probable, from these circumstances, that our progress through Russia would have been summarily stopped, as that of my acquaintance General, then Major Bacon; and all this, too, from the suspicion, on the part of the Czar's government, of the

object of my connexion with the prince's party; the more especially as we travelled with his father's (Abbas Mirza) physician, Mr. Cormick, who had only left him at St. Petersburg, for a fortnight's visit to London.

At the palace of the governor-general, we had the good fortune to meet the illustrious Humboldt, who had just returned from his travels to the Ural mountains, and was now on his way to Berlin. He spoke of the desire he felt of visiting Persia and ancient Babylonia, but hinted that the King of Prussia was averse to his wandering in climes so far distant at present. Previously to quitting Moscow, he gave an outline of his recent journey at the public university in that city.

The oldest British resident here, was Mr. Rowan, who treated the eccentric Captain Cochrane with such kindness when he passed hence, on his way to Siberia. Mr. Rowan had a vivid remembrance of Napoleon's entry into the city in 1812. In fact, some of the Emperor's staff officers were billeted on him; and to this day he favours his

visitors with a sight of various official records which they, in the hurry of retreat, left behind them.

During our stay in this ancient and interesting capital, our dinner was daily dressed in the kitchen of the most celebrated of all its sovereigns. This is a fact: for Mrs. Howard's house had been a private residence of the Emperor Paul, and the kitchen had never been altered from the time it belonged to royalty, but stood a memorial of the rudeness of the age in which it was built.

The time now drew near for Khosrou Mirza's departure: General Baron Rennenkampff had been appointed his mehmaundar* by the Emperor Nicholas, with orders for relays of horses, of no less a number than four hundred, at every post-house throughout the whole line of road towards Tiflis. To effect a compliance with this order, several military couriers proceeded in advance, and the whole

* Literally, an attendant on a guest. An officer appointed by a government to attend upon strangers while travelling.

suite were provided with handsome chariots, dormeuses, berlines, and calèches; even the servants were supplied with britzkas and telegas. We bought for seven hundred and fifty roubles, one large enough to hold a mattrass; it was made in three parts by a canny Scotchman, whose taciturnity used to amuse us, and who doubtless had the old saying in his mind, that "walls have ears;" for he pretended an utter ignorance of every thing regarding the government and the country, although he had resided in Russia for eighteen years.

The winter of 1829 was unusually severe. We experienced a frost of from twelve to fifteen degrees during our whole stay at Moscow, with every indication of a still greater increase. The snow lay so deep, that long before we reached Tula, we were obliged to unship our carriage-wheels, and travel *en traineau*. At whatever town we halted, the most obsequious attentions were lavished on the young envoy, and whenever he alighted from his carriage to partake of

any refreshment, carpets were laid across the streets and passages, and the rooms he entered were hung with flags, garlands, and flowers. A crowned head could not have received greater homage from a devoted people.

We glided smoothly and swiftly over the snow at a railway speed, declaring our conviction that sledge-travelling was the pleasantest thing in the world. Our "isoostchick" or driver, evidently entertained the same opinion, for he chatted and shouted to his steeds as they galloped up and down the steepest hills, until, in our descent of one with the velocity of lightning, we suddenly found ourselves rolling over and over towards a steep break-neck precipice, that lay in a most convenient position for the performance of a romantic feat. On recovering from so unexpected a shock, we descried the box-seat of our unfortunate britzka, rolling most unwillingly upon its fore axle towards the next post-house with all the rapidity which four infuriated steeds could employ; and we

might have been left to find the best of our way to Voronitz on foot, had not one of the general's couriers from the rear most charitably lent a helping hand to us in our distress.

Arriving at Voronitz, the governor-general, Astrikass, received the prince into his own palace, and entertained him at a ball and supper, to which most of the officers cantoned in the town, with their families, were invited. The prince had little reason to think much of the beauty of the Voronitz belles; for, of the whole assemblage, *one* only possessed any pretensions to good looks, and she was *passée*. This pretty coquette had formerly been a great favourite with the Emperor Alexander, but was now transformed into the faithful wife of a major of hussars, who considered himself in high luck to be so well yoked. She wore a handsome gold chain, long pendant brilliants, and a complete stomacher of diamonds, the gift of her late royal lover. Her countenance was impressively winning, with round dimpled cheeks, that made the

black eyes of many of our Persian friends sparkle with pleasure.

By this time Khosrou Mirza had completely discarded all those prejudices which Asiatics in general, and Mahommedans in particular, entertain with respect to an unreserved association with women in public, and which, on his first entry into Russia, he entertained in a superlative degree. He had now become a tolerable French scholar—excelled in small talk—*polonaised* with the ladies—and greatly delighted in all those lively French games of which the Russians are so fond; as, for instance, *Le Chat et la Souris*, and “*The ring and the silken cord* ;” these two were his especial favourites, because they were very noisy and full of fun. It was, indeed, a strange sight to see such a motley group,—princes with their ladies—field-mars-hals with their mustachioed aides-de-camp—generals with the majors of brigade—Persian khans with their long flowing robes, bushy beards, and grave and fierce looks—all romping together with the glee of children.

At the supper-table, the rich mounting of the prince's handsome dagger became an object of curiosity from its resplendent brilliancy. His excellency perceiving this, politely unfastened the string of pearls that confined it to his shawl-encircled waist, and handed it about for inspection. Each lady expressed greater admiration than the last, until it came round to Mrs. Mignan, who sat just opposite him, and who, examining the blade first, which was of fine Damascus steel, called forth from the prince an exclamation of the strongest delight. He declared he had never before seen a lady who knew how much more valuable good steel was than gaudy ornaments; and he added, "She deserves to have been born a man"—an opinion, to European ears, not very flattering; but to those well acquainted with the Eastern prejudices of women having no souls, &c., the greatest compliment that could be paid.

The young prince spoke in the warmest terms of the emperor's munificence to himself

and suite, and of the liberality and splendour with which he had been treated. In proof of this, he one evening desired his jewels to be brought into the drawing-room, when he displayed two imperial eagles spreading out their wings to the extent of eight inches, and entirely composed of diamonds. They had been made at the express command of the autocrat ; one to be suspended from his neck, as a military order of Russia—the other, as an aigraffe, for his soft lamb-skin cap.

During his whole stay at St. Petersburg, a palace overlooking the Neva had been assigned for his own occupation, and a second (the Taurida) for the accommodation of his suite ; the whole being allowed carriages and horses throughout the day and night—himself always driving eight, accompanied by a complete retinue of servants and a guard of honour. At the parting interview between Prince Khosrou, and Alexander Nicholaevitch, the emperor's eldest son, sabres were exchanged, vows repeated, and mutual promises made, which time has yet to perform.

General Astrikass was a Livonian by birth, and, assuredly, one of the most hospitable governors in the Russian empire. We daily experienced much kindness and attention from himself and family, which it would be ungrateful to forget, or not to record. On our quitting Voronitz, after a halt of twelve days, he accompanied the motley *cortége* for several miles towards Stavropole; and when he bade us adieu, he embraced the shah-zadez most cordially.

As we approached the Cossack country, we ran the risk of getting our necks broken at every verst, for it was difficult to know which were wildest, the drivers or their horses. The first specimen we had of this genius seemed bent on giving us an idea of what a Don Cossack *could* do, as he most scrupulously avoided the beaten track, and, setting hedges and ditches at defiance, dashed his steeds onward at full gallop, vociferating and yelling to the full extent of his stentorian powers. The animals, too, acknowledged in their way these stimulating appli-

ances, with distended nostrils, flowing manes, erect tails, and increased velocity. I can *well* imagine, that to a simple beholder, the scene would have worn the appearance of Phaeton driving the Pegasi with the whips of the Furies.

That several "breaks down" occurred is not very remarkable, nor the consequent annihilation of scores of kaleoons*, and the smashing of several dozens of Donskoi champagne, which would have sufficed to furnish a Lord Mayor's banquet. Monsieur le General Rennenkampf had certainly been most liberal in his supply of wines, and the *temperate* Persians were equally profuse in their libations to the memory of the blessed prophet Mahommed. By-the-by, one exception must, in justice, be made in favour of our friend Mirza Baba, the shah-zadeh's hakim-bashee, or physician general. He was most enthusiastically devoted to Bacchus, and excused himself for always being *entre deux vins*;

* Kaleoon, a Persian pipe.

as the weather was so bitterly cold, his shoob (cloak) was not sufficiently warm : he strongly recommended a tumbler of noyeau, or cherry-bounce, (*medicinally*, of course), as being highly salutiferous, and followed up his goodly precept by practice. Although he could empty a bottle of English brandy at one draught,* his sobriety was unimpeachable. You might as well have attempted to intoxicate a sponge. He was, beyond all dispute, the best specimen of a candidate for the "Temperance Society" I ever knew. Some years ago, our erudite pupil of Esculapius was sent to England, with other of his countrymen, by the *wish* of the Persian, but at the *expense* of the British government, for the purpose of studying medicine : he resided in London a considerable time, but was too lazy a dog to obtain his diploma. I had an opportunity of seeing a good deal of this

* I remember seeing the nakodâh (captain) of a trading boat, between Bussorah and Bagdad, take the same quantity of brandy, and in a similar way. It produced no intoxicating effect whatever.

Persian *roué* on the journey, and found his countenance so entirely at variance with his conduct, that it would have defied the keen penetrating eye of Deville himself. He had, however, gained a decided advantage over the rest of his compeers, by having added *our* vices to *his* own.

He was a married man—for who in Persia is not?—from motives of worldly interest; but as his village, (Khojah, in the volcanic province of Azerbijaun,) the gift of his royal master, Abbas Mirza, the prince royal of Persia, had been so abundant, and his fat wife so old and ugly, he determined to add to his household goods by taking another, and (must I add?) another; and “this time,” said he, “I shall consult my naturally good taste:” but how he intended to effect a choice from amongst the inmates of the numerous harems of Tabriz, was a secret he would not impart. Notwithstanding all her deficiencies, his pursy wife had one redeeming accomplishment, that of being a most rare confectioner, as boxes of various con-

serves given to our little girl, most *sweetly* told. Of these, the *jild-il-furuz*, or “mare’s leather,” equalled anything that Verey’s best *artiste en cuisine* could supply.

This unequalled sweetmeat is made of the juice of a particular kind of Persian grape, and loaf sugar, boiled together until it attains the consistency of Indian rubber. White manna cakes, made with almonds and cashewnuts*, and the Persian *kiss* of barley sugar, would not, I am quite certain, be thought inferior to what we get in England: and they possess an additional recommendation in my eyes, that these things are never made by menials, but are always the amusing occupation of the fair-fingered ladies of the harem.

* The produce of the *anacardium occidentale*, the *noix d’acajou* of the French.

CHAPTER II.

The River Don—Novo Tcherkask—Russian Women—Stavropole—
Bravery of the Tcherkessians—A French Play—Anecdote of
Prince Khosrou—Danger from Cold—Snow-storm—Dreadful
Night—Happy Meeting—Khosrou's Party—Intense Frost—The
Plague—The Lesguys—Amusing Spectacle—Passage of the
Caucasus.

OUR cavalcade crossed the river Don *en grande tenue* (still sledging it), and halted for a couple of days at Novo Tcherkask, the capital city of the Cossacks*, where we went through another edition of the same festivities as those of Tula and Voronitz. The delightful change from filth and dirt, to the extreme of cleanliness, not to be surpassed

* It is scarcely necessary to remind the reader that the name of *Cossacks* is taken from the Slavonic word *Koss*, a scythe. For want of arms, the peasants used to go to war with their scythes, whence they were called Cossacks, or scythemen.

by any people in the world, was truly gratifying to our feelings, for every part of their household establishment was in perfect keeping. Immediately on our arrival, we lost no time in enjoying the delights which warm water, soap, and clean linen impart, and inexpressibly delightful was the first and every succeeding day which we spent here, after having been for so many weeks obliged to submit to Russian filth and abominations. The harassed traveller alone knows the pleasure of such a change: to my weary family it was indeed a relief that none except those similarly situated can understand.

The river Don supplied our table with the most delicious fish, which closely resembled the sable of the Euphrates, both in shape and taste, and which were caught during the night by the fishermen of the place, by cutting large holes in the ice. Here we also enjoyed to perfection the celebrated Donskoi wine already noticed; and although most liberally supplied by our generous mehmaundar with champagne,

burgundy, Perkins's bottled porter, and every kind of wine and ale, of first-rate quality, we preferred the wine of the Don to any other beverage. It was sold in the public market for two roubles the bottle, or only ten shillings per dozen. The bazaar was the largest I had seen out of England. Several long platforms ran parallel to, and at right angles with each other: these were raised a foot or two from the ground, covered with lofty sheds, and surrounded by a steep stone-paved gutter, precisely after the manner of the new bazaars in Bombay, Poonah, and other Indian towns.

We took our leave of the governor of Novo Tcherkask, and reached Stavrapole on the 8th of December, where Prince Khosrou, his mehmaundar the baron, and whole suite, were quartered at the governor's house. We were billeted on a major of infantry, who held some petty staff employment in the town, and who, with a wife and two children, considered himself "passing rich with *twenty* pounds a year." Three young slaves

formed the whole of his establishment, and the daily costume of the lady of the house was a common cotton print wrapper, or dressing-gown, drawn on as dowdily as it could possibly be ; though she possessed many valuable shawls, furs, and trinkets, which she only sported on feast and other gala days. This slatternly custom on the part of the Russian women prevails throughout the whole country. They should only be seen once a week, when attending mass ; but all the officers are excessive dandies, dress *à l'Empereur*, and drive very handsome sledges.

Stavrapole is the chief town of a district, and the head-quarters of the Russian general commanding the army of the Caucasus, which consists of ten thousand men. This force, however, is utterly unable to subdue the warlike Tcherkessians, who emerge from the sloping spurs of Mount Caucasus, and overrun the whole of this part of southern Russia. These brave Tcherkessians have never yet lost their independence, nor ever

will become tributaries either to Russia or to Turkey. Their expeditionary corps consists of five or six hundred well accoutred men, who break through the strongest Russian infantry squares, and behead every prisoner they take. Although the Russians have added to their large force, a number of Ossatinian Kossacks, who fight with great bravery, the Tcherkessians disperse them like dust. This harassing warfare has occupied, during the last twenty years, the ablest Russian generals, has decimated their regiments, exhausted their treasure, and still bids defiance to the Czar's most powerful efforts; and this too, without any assistance! A small supply of military stores occasionally sent over to them would most materially assist in keeping the Russian power in check on this frontier.

The general * had a most interesting family.

* I quite forget the name of the governor of this district and town, but he had highly distinguished himself at the battle of Leipzig, and was an officer of great ability.

The eldest of his eleven children, a daughter, was extremely pretty. Prince Khosrou, when on his way to St. Petersburg, fell desperately in love with her, and now, on his return, declared he had not seen any lady at the Russian court to compare with her in beauty. The children and their three governesses acted French plays in a large saloon fitted up as a theatre; and it was not a little gratifying to the shahzadeh, that he so well understood the language, for he always entered into the very spirit of what they were performing. A French play commenced the entertainment of the evening, dancing followed, then music and French games amused us until past midnight, when we supped in public. Refreshments were likewise handed round the whole evening, and large baskets of *bon-bons* were constantly disappearing. This we observed to be the practice at every party. A singular custom also prevailed after the ladies had retired from table—namely, a general and indiscriminate scramble for the remains of the supper, when each lucky individual deposited

in his pocket whatever his good fortune enabled him to clutch. I saw an old general, upon one occasion, strutting out of the room with the leg of a goose just peeping from the back pocket of his richly embroidered coatee. Mrs. Mignan inquired of Doctor Cormick what became of the custards and jellies? He replied, with a shrug, "I really don't know, but they all go in together."

Khosrou Mirza whiled away his time on this dull, monotonous road, with his favorite game—chess, of which he was passionately fond, when *not* in female society. He had a board and men adapted for use in a carriage, where he always invited to a trial of skill either Baron Rennenkampff, Mahommed Khan, or Mirza Massoud. Mrs. M. once had the *misfortune* to beat *son altesse*, the novelty and disgrace of which drove him from the room, colourless and affronted. This was the only instance that I saw of his temper gaining the ascendancy over his sound sense: it might be that the Persians standing near (Mahommed Khan, and Mirza Baba) ex-

claimed, "What! beaten by a woman—excellent! he will never forget that!" Doctor Cormick clapped his hands, and said, "See what a lady can do: where is the male superiority now?"

On the 23rd we quitted Stavrapole for Georgiesk, and nothing worthy of notice happened until Christmas-day, (a memorable day indeed,) when we arrived at a post-house, where we all dined, and where a double number of horses were engaged to accomplish a distance of forty versts, the longest stage throughout the whole line of road between Moscow and Mount Caucasus. At this point Mrs. Mignan was conveyed from her britzka to the post quite paralyzed with cold, and placed beneath a mountain of furs and cloaks, with the application of every means usually resorted to in these cases—violent friction applied to the feet, and hot brandy and water taken inwardly. This detained her until some time after the prince's party had started, and this was actually the cause of saving the life of herself and of her children. On being re-

stored, she also proceeded onwards for about an hour, when the drivers, finding that night was fast closing in and the storm still continued to rage with such fury that they could not face it, became seriously alarmed. Having lost all traces of the road, and finding the snow above the axletrees of the carriage, they, unknown to her, turned back, and most providentially reached the post-house they had so recently left. Ignorant of the drivers having returned, as they had only crawled along at a snail's gallop, with the snow up to the horses bellies, she felt the greatest alarm at finding herself at the door of a cottage where she could perceive no lights, nor any of the prince's carriages or attendants. The drivers vainly endeavoured to make her understand that it was the post-house whence they originally started, but she refused to alight. Fortunately at this moment a *calèche* with the two couriers who always brought up the rear, arrived, and induced her to alight with the servant and children. They explained in a few broken

French sentences that it was impossible to go forward, as the violence of the snow storm would prevent any guide from tracing the road. That dreadful night was passed in agony, heightened by the fact of whole squads of soldiers of a regiment then on its return from the Turkish campaign bringing in the lifeless bodies of their comrades. Of those brought in, some few were restored to life, others were past recovery, whilst hundreds remained shrouded beneath the snow.

On the following morning, the military, accompanied by parties of villagers, went forth with long poles with the intention of searching for the dead bodies of those who were missing. Mrs. Mignan continued in such a state of mind, that she preferred risking her life rather than remain any longer in an indescribable agony of suspense. As soon as there was some appearance of light, the couriers prepared a covered sledge for her accommodation, with plenty of fur cloaks, and seating themselves with the driver in front, they started off. They had not proceeded many miles before the storm recom-

menced, and they were compelled to return. In the afternoon, when it had abated, they again attempted to resume the journey, with four choice horses, and again failed. No alternative was now left to my poor lady, but to remain separated from us all for a second night, ignorant of our fate, but dreading the worst. To her unspeakable joy, the morrow broke with a clear sky. Taking a hasty cup of coffee, they set out in a wicker sledge of great lightness, leaving the carriages and "telegas" to follow, as, from the great depth of the snow, they could not accomplish the stage under eight or ten hours, having to be dragged through it; whereas the lightness of the sledge would enable themselves to perform it in about three hours. Midway we met, I having been also unsuccessful in my first and second attempts the day before; although in a large town, where the authorities, by order of General Rennenkampff, had provided parties of mounted guides, and the bravest of the military in bands of three unceasingly attempted, without success, to find the road the whole of the previous day;

so that my family were given up as lost. The prince, however, had determined not to proceed further, until some tidings should be heard of them, and, on their arrival, congratulations were poured forth by each and all.

Khosrou Mirza's party had likewise most severely suffered. The general, at the commencement of the storm, anticipating the danger that impended, insisted on the prince leaving the post-house with all speed, and entering the carriage with him. They then urged their drivers and their fourteen picked horses, kept ahead of all, and accomplished the stage, with the loss, however, of one postilion, who was frozen to death, whilst some of the others lost the use of their arms and legs.

The last time I was able to notice the thermometer, I found it at twenty-eight degrees below the freezing point of Fahrenheit, and still descending. Doctor Cormick, myself, Mirzas Salah, Baba, and others of the suite, were exposed to the fury of a drifting snow-storm for twenty-three successive hours, without being able to obtain any refreshment whatever, and only

saving ourselves by turning the carriages against the drifting snow and violent wind, that cut us like a sharp-edged razor. Every now and then we moved either forwards or backwards to effect a change of position, or we should have been buried altogether. Several post-boys were frozen to death upon their horses. Doctor Cormick lost the use of his left arm, and I, who had been in a kabitka or sledge, only partially covered, was so benumbed on my arrival, that I could not move hand or foot, but was carried into the post-house as dead.

During these three-and-twenty hours, I wore only two English great coats; I neglected to draw on a third at starting, and feeling the want of it a few minutes afterwards, I found it useless—it was as stiff and as hard as a deal board. The sensations I experienced were not by any means unpleasant; quite the contrary. I fancied myself falling into a most pleasing dream; and although perfectly conscious that this stupor was the certain precursor of destruction, I could not make the slightest effort to shake

it off. On recovering, I was assured that had they neglected to look into the sledge immediately on its arrival, and I been exposed a few minutes longer, I should have been a corpse.

We baited at Georgiesk, and crossed the steppes to Alexandroff, and the great quarantine station of Ekaterinograd, situated on the rapid river Terek, where I had the previous year endured twenty-four day's solitary confinement. The universal topic of conversation here was the plague: it was the first time we had yet heard it mentioned, and several villages in the vicinity had been destroyed by fire at the express orders of the authorities. We passed one suspected hamlet, which was surrounded by a mounted guard, to prevent any person approaching it.

At Ekaterinograd we were furnished with a strong military escort and two twelve-pounders, to ensure our safe transit to the fortress of Vladi Kaukass, and to protect us against any sudden attack from the Lesguys, who scour the whole country hence to the very gates of Tiflis. On more than one

occasion, when led by their warlike chief Ummia Khan, they extended their ravages to the southward of the Araxes, and to within a few miles of Tabriz. They are divided into several independent tribes, and cannot be less in number than five hundred thousand men. The Russians have already sacrificed their hundreds in attempts to subdue them, hitherto wholly without success. During the last Persian war, these Lesguys brought from their mountains no fewer than thirty thousand fighting men to oppose the army of the Caucasus.

On reaching this fortress, the carriage travelling of the Persians was to end, to their no small delight, for they considered these vehicles only fit for sick men or old women, none of them having previously to their entry into Russia ever seen one. The manner in which they had urged on the poor "Jarvies" had repeatedly afforded us great amusement. They had no idea of travelling at a moderate pace, but wished to keep the unfortunate steeds at full gallop for the whole stage, and whenever the pace was mode-

rated, they, roaring with laughter, cuffed the Kaffer* drivers, and heaped upon them all the elegant abuse which their language so richly affords. At every stage they plied them with "vodki†," which intoxicates without causing that *pugnacious* quality that our gin imparts.

We here witnessed a most amusing *spectacle* from the windows of our bed-room, which commanded a view of the parade-ground, when a particular inspection was taking place, and the following extraordinary movements made.

The sergeant at the head of the first column produced a piece of pipe-clay, the fragment of a towel and a brush, and applied one or the other to every man in line. They appeared a raw set, which I suppose must account for such an unmilitary proceeding.

At this place we were obliged to abandon our carriage, it having undergone such

* Kaffer, or infidel—a term of reproach.

† An ardent spirit distilled from rye. It is consumed in great quantities by the Russians, both male and female.

violent shocks, that it could not possibly have stood the jolting of another stage. From the season of the year, it was found advisable also to leave the whole of the fifty carriages, except three, those of the Prince, Doctor Cormick, and Mirza Salah, at the same station: each of these had eighteen pair of oxen attached to them. The Prince, as well as the rest of the Persians, travelled on horseback, and my family occupied whichever of the carriages they felt inclined to take. Fourteen hundred men had been employed for a fortnight previously to our reaching Caucasus, in cutting a road through the snow. Hitherto none but the mounted post had ever effected the passage of Mount Caucasus in the month of January, and it was a common occurrence for one or more of the party to be lost. I may safely say, that Mrs. Mignan was the first lady who had performed it in the very depth of winter, and with two children, one not six months old!

CHAPTER III.

Fearful Road—Mountain Track—An Accident—Perilous Journey—Ossatinians—Unhappy Peasant—Anecdote of Count Paskewitch—Meschet—Approach to Tiflis—Arrival there—Splendid Costumes—The Countess Paskewitch—Georgian Dance—Georgian Princesses—Reception at the Palace—A Sunday masked Ball—A black Dwarf—Prince Galitzin—Beautiful Georgian—Georgian Women—Baths at Tiflis.

ON leaving Vladi Kaukass, we wound along the base of the perpendicular granite mountains, and by the side of a clear and rapid mountain-torrent, over which the peasants had erected several mills, of the rudest and most clumsy construction that could possibly be devised. The road was indeed more fearfully rugged than any over which we had ever passed; every turn of the wheels, which were entirely bound with rope, threatened to dash the carriage to atoms. The extraordinarily shaped ravines, and the awfully deep gorges which led into them, were very striking. The accommodation at the post-

stations being so small, afforded only two comfortless rooms, to obtain which we had to dislodge the commandants and their families, who were obliged to make shift with the kitchens and stables. It was therefore impossible that we could accompany the prince and his party; so, it was previously agreed upon, that, during the passage of these Caucasian Alps, we should precede them by one stage.

We did not reach the snow until the third day after our entrance, when early that morning the commandant of the station ordered two carts to go forward, as the snow was extremely deep, and a fall having taken place during the night, he wished to have a track marked out for the carriage. A military guard, and a courier to direct the operations of eighty men, with ropes attached to every part of the carriage, accompanied us. We had proceeded about a mile, and were ascending the sloping side of a vast mountain, when suddenly the first cart was hurled down a tremendous precipice, by a body of snow

shelving from an overhanging cliff. At the moment it wore the appearance of a dense cloud sweeping down the mountain's brow; but, instantly perceiving what had occurred, Mrs. Mignan leaped out of the carriage, determined not to advance another step. Indeed, this determination was anticipated, for the road was completely blocked up, and we were forced to return, when a party of soldiers were sent to dig out the unfortunate driver, and to endeavour to recover the property, which belonged to Khosrou Mirza, and which was very valuable. After digging for twelve hours they returned at eleven o'clock at night with the man, and most of the property. The horse had been torn limb from limb, and the cart shattered to pieces.

Shortly after this, the prince and suite arrived. Mrs. Mignan determined to remain in the carriage all night, as the shahzadeh occupied one room, and at least twelve persons were domiciliated in the second, whilst the inferiors inhabited a barrack shed. She continued in the carriage closely shut up,

until about twelve o'clock, when it was feared our lives would be endangered by longer exposure. The Persians parted off a small corner of the room already containing twelve persons, by hanging up shawls and cloaks, as *perdahs*, or screens.

Next morning, when the hour for starting had arrived, the road impediments had been removed, and fearful as it was, we were compelled to resume our perilous journey, which was more appalling than words can express. Some parts of our track were so dangerous from the avalanches which had shelved across it, that even the Persian horsemen dismounted and led their steeds for many miles : and we were forced to quit the carriage, and wade through the snow knee-deep. Some of the perpendicular precipices of this primitive chain were so fearful, that it was scarcely possible to look steadily over them. At one part of the road, I and another person held Mrs. Mignan, who wished to take a glimpse at a ravine which travellers have estimated to be ten thousand feet deep, where fir trees were .

scarcely distinguishable, and seemed to be not an inch in height. The glancing of the sun's rays upon the snow must have been the cause of their being at all discernible.

We passed through an Ossatinian village, the inhabitants of which had submitted to the Russians, and were organized as Cossacks. The great mass of this tribe, however, yields no obedience to the imperial crown, and all acts of hostility against it, as well as highway robbery, are highly applauded. The profession of a freebooter is with them an honourable one. The only crime they consider disgraceful, is to break an oath once taken never to injure those with whom a treaty exists. A law founded upon compact is implicitly obeyed: in all other cases, "might is right."

At the defile of Annanour, which is another quarantine station in the recesses of this stupendous chain, we met a poor peasant overwhelmed with grief prostrated before the commandant, and exclaiming—"My wife, and parents, are lying dead of the

plague in the next village; I am afraid to bury them." The Russian instantly despatched a party of soldiers to set fire to all the neighbouring hamlets; and turning to me said, smilingly, "'Tis my vocation!" I gave the unfortunate sufferer a few roubles, which the commandant noticing, he laughed, and ridiculed the concern I expressed for this miserable Ossatinian. I subsequently mentioned the circumstance to Field-Marshal Count Paskewitch at Tiflis, who also laughed, and said, "You Englishmen are always inclined to regard with seriousness the *veriest trifles*."

We were six days in effecting this difficult and dangerous passage, having forced the *Pilæ Caspiæ** in the very depth of one of the

* Between the Euxine and the Caspian, the countries of Colchos, Iberia, and Albania, are intersected in every direction by the branches of Mount Caucasus, and the two principal *gates*, or passes from north to south, have been frequently confounded, in the geography both of the ancients and moderns. The Iberian *gates* are formed by a narrow passage of six miles in Mount Caucasus,

severest winters ever known in Russia. On the seventh, we passed through the picturesque city of Meschet, once the capital of Georgia, and the burial-place of all its ancient kings. Two fine churches still exist entire, and around the adjacent hills are the remains of walls and buildings, mouldering in decay. The peasants told me they often discovered old coins and medals,

which opens from the northern side of Iberia, or Georgia, into the plain that reaches to the Tanais and the Volga. These gates excluded the horsemen of Scythia from the shortest and most practicable roads, and the whole front of the mountains was covered by the rampart of Gog and Magog, the long wall which has excited the curiosity of an Arabian kaliph and a Russian conqueror. (Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. Chap. xl. page 680. *Youngman*, 1830).

The imaginary rampart of Gog and Magog, which was seriously explored and believed by the kaliphs of the ninth century, appears to be derived from the *gates* of Mount Caucasus, and a vague report of the great wall of China. (Geograph. Nubiensis, p. 267-270. *Memoirs de l'Academie*, tom. xxxi. p. 210-219. See also a learned dissertation of Baier *de Muro Caucasio*, in *Comment. Acad. Petropol.*, ann. 1726. tom. i. p. 425-463.

amongst the ruins of this place, which they carried to Tiflis for sale. We were not fortunate enough, however, to procure any of them. The Koor and Aragua here form a junction: the former river boasts of a dilapidated bridge, supposed to have been the work of Pompey; the latter we crossed, and learnt with great joy that we were only thirteen or fourteen miles distant from the gates of Tiflis.

The road wound close at the foot of a succession of undulating gravelly hills of very considerable elevation, which formed a perpendicular wall on our right; whilst to our left we hung upon a precipitous bank, where the rain had gradually washed and shivered its edges, leaving scarcely its bare breadth for the passage of the carriages—the near wheels being frequently within an inch or two of a frightfully deep ravine, shelving down to the Koor, which playfully meandered through a fertile and beautifully wooded valley. Fronting us lay the extensive suburbs of the modern capital of Georgia and

two large German colonies ; in rear, the entire range of the Caucasian Alps, traversing the isthmus from sea to sea, with its volcanic looking peaks reposing beneath eternal snows, presented a landscape well worthy of the pencil of a Claude, or a Salvator Rosa.

Still winding along the steep and tortuous banks of the Koor, we arrived on the following evening at Tiflis, where Field-Marshal Count Paskewitch, Governor-General of Georgia, received the envoy with military honours. Having written from Moscow to Monsieur le Chevalier Gamba, the Consul of France, to engage us apartments, we found our request complied with, and were lodged within two doors of the Consulate. I had formerly received great attention from the chevalier, and on this occasion Mrs. Mignan became a debtor to his daughter for various acts of kindness, so much needed and dearly prized in situations like those I have described. I also had the satisfaction of hearing from Lord Heytesbury, who enclosed me more introductory letters, which eventually

proved of great use, and placed me under still deeper obligations to that hospitable and high-minded nobleman.

Before we had recovered from our fatigues, we were invited by the Countess Paskewitch to a grand ball and supper at the palace, where we saw the whole of the royal family of Georgia seated together upon sofas, at one side of the room; the countess and Khosrou Mirza occupied a couch at its head, and Paskewitch, Prince of Erivan, appeared amongst his numerous staff, one blaze of diamonds,—the very strings to the scabbard of his sword, and the scabbard itself, being entirely studded. The Persian order of the Lion and Sun, which he wore on his right breast, equalled the full moon in size, and his countess displayed the greatest number of large pearls Mrs. M. had ever witnessed on one individual; they were the size of a big pea. A double row was tacked round the top of the body of her dress, but on the shoulders they were left in several loops of three inches long: on the left shoulder to the front the miniature of the empress was

suspended; a little further back, on the same shoulder, that of the emperor—both set in brilliants. The same costly pearls, in two long rows, were hung around her neck, and a tiara of diamonds graced her head. Her countenance was very pleasing, though her features were large, her complexion most excellent, and her dark eye had great depth of expression. I should judge her to be a gifted and sensible woman. Indeed, she received the attentions of the company with that lady-like and graceful familiarity which would have made a pupil of the Almack's school of "*hauteurs*" ready to faint. She understood English, though she did not like to speak it, but requested Mrs. M. to converse with her in her native tongue, to which the countess replied in French. Mrs. Mignan received from her the most condescending kindness and attention, always finding the same reception on every successive visit we paid at the palace. She had two very interesting children of five and six years old, and a French governess, their English governess

having only a short time previously returned to her own country on *sick certificate*. Colonel Monteith, of the Madras Engineers, was, most opportunely for her, passing through Tiflis, with a vacant seat in his britzka; *others*, as well as himself, thought it could not be better occupied than by generously ceding it to his fair country-woman.

The marshal's manner was repulsive, or rather I should say he spoke with that quick and decided tone which is not agreeable in society. His eagle and restless eye never looked in the countenance of the individual whom he was addressing, but still seemed to know what was passing in his mind. Mrs. Mignan always felt a kind of fear at his immediate presence, and was somewhat puzzled to answer all his rapid and inquisitive questions. It was a relief when he turned to address another object. He is the only field marshal in the Russian army.

The band here was the best we had yet

heard, being full and very efficient. Due justice was paid to its spirited performance, by the dancers waltzing and galloping for many hours after supper. The prince *polonaised* with the countess, was always in high spirits, and enjoyed every thing around him. He had learnt a few words of English to address to Mrs. Mignan when he thought no one was near who understood them, and he sometimes raised the curiosity of his fair friends most provokingly.

For the envoy's amusement, one of the young Georgian princesses was requested to perform the national dance, when their own band was called into requisition, which in its stunning effect could not be surpassed by the most powerful Turkish or Indian music. The lady advanced a few steps from the place where she had been sitting, with body erect, arms extended, toes and heels moving with the greatest precision to the quick-timed music, which was regularly marked by the aid of a pair of rudely-shaped castanets. A second advance of a few steps was then made,

accompanied by a shuffling of the feet; then a receding movement, and a series of rapid tunes, closed this superlatively ungraceful dance. The age of the exhibitor might have been twelve or thirteen; she was dressed in the national costume, as indeed they all were, except two, who were married to Russian officers, and they were over-dressed *à la Française*. The appearance of these princesses disappointed us, inasmuch as they were automaton, shapeless in figure, and in most unbecoming habiliments; but with a purity of complexion unequalled in the world, features regular to a fault, and eyes of deepest black; lovely pictures in face, yet without the slightest expression. We did not observe them once exchange a word with each other; they might easily have been mistaken for waxen figures. The dance of the gentleman (a very handsome scion of royalty) differed from that of the lady only in extra exertion; feeling no bashfulness, he gave it full truth and play. The contrast between their usual demeanour, and the

activity displayed in this dance was very striking, and brought to mind the saying of Napoleon, that there is but one step from the sublime to the ridiculous.

The palace is a most extensive and handsome building ; its public suite of apartments splendid both in size and decoration. On ascending the grand staircase, we reached a corridor ornamented with lofty pillars, through which we were led to a hall full of military. Our cloaks were speedily received by the servants in waiting, and we passed up the banqueting-saloon, laid out with tables on each side for one hundred guests, and, crossing an ante-chamber, entered the ball-room. From the latter, two doors led into the drawing-room, which was most luxuriously and elegantly furnished with hangings of crimson satin damask, ornamented with gold fringes and tassels ; mirrors reaching from the ceiling to the floor, ottomans, ormulas, candelabras, musical instruments, &c.

Crossing a gallery, used for promenading, we entered two very handsome card-rooms,

in which the old *roués*, who had lost all relish for the ball-room, sat risking their ducats at the *mouche* tables. Of this game all the Russians are passionately fond; especially the ladies, who are the chief actors in this drama of chance.

We here became acquainted with Prince Galitzin, who had accompanied the late Emperor Alexander to this country during the year 1814. He was a nephew of the highly respected governor-general of Moscow, and commanded a regiment of cavalry stationed in Georgia. We saw him every day, and found his society most agreeable. He was a perfect gentleman.

The military governor-general, Strekaloff, to whom we had letters, lived in quite a different style to Prince Paskewitch, but nevertheless as became his rank and station. He gave a splendid *bal masqué* during our stay here, to which we were invited, but would not go, the day chosen being Sunday, which I may here remark is the favourite *fête* day of the Russians; the same occurrence,

having taken place before at Tula, and other places. Our home-bred scruples, as they were termed, caused a good deal of merriment, and we were requested by some to go, merely to look on; for there could be no sin in using our eyes, if we did not speak. Such was their style of argument.

General Strekaloff's valet was a black dwarf, thirty-two years old, and only three feet and a half in height, for whom he was most anxious to procure a wife, but did not know by what means to attain his object. He had however advertised for one suited in stature, as the little man was a great favourite, and the general wished to make him happy and contented. What success eventually attended this matrimonial scheme we did not hear, as, up to the day of our quitting Tiflis, the black dwarf was still in single blessedness.

Prince Galitzin assured us how much we had lost by not having been present at Strekaloff's masquerade, as he said it was the best he had ever seen; that the number

of masquers could not have been exceeded if it had taken place at Moscow, and that there had been much fun and gaiety. He did not forget to add, on his own account, that the decorative part of the business had been got up under his own directions, and executed by the military under his orders. He was, doubtless, a great adept in all these things. Having been in London with the allied sovereigns, during the carnival of 1814, he could not have failed to improve his talents and taste; for no one could have been a visitor at the most dazzlingly splendid court in the world—that of his late Majesty King George the Fourth—without forming a better taste, and improving any talent for embellishment with which he might have been gifted.

We spent many very pleasant evenings at Chevalier Gamba's house, when there was no larger party going on. His daughter was a well-bred sensible woman, and our *soirées* there were far more entertaining than the *grande affaires* at the palace. Mirzas Salah and Massoud were the two determined

gamblers of our party, and found a ready partner in the chevalier, who, I am inclined to believe, was an over-match for their inexperience, because his secretary more than once corrected a *little mistake* he made, when playing ducat games at *ecarté* with Mrs. Mignan. Nevertheless, they were both good Catholics — the daughter really so; for nought save hard boiled eggs were their portion on a Friday, though we were vicious enough to employ our most persuasive efforts in endeavouring to induce them to take more digestive food.

The most beautiful Georgian woman that we saw was the daughter of the landlord of our house, who, had she been an inhabitant of any capital in Europe, would have been run after as a divinity; so true is it that “no one is a prophet in his own country,” for here she was thought nothing of. Mrs. Mignan had many opportunities of seeing her, and for the pleasure of admiring her beauty, held conversations by signs, (she could speak no other language than her own) and felt as-

sured there was no aid of foreign ornament. Her figure was slim, tall, and well formed for a Georgian, with auburn hair of great length. My wife had a curiosity to see how she would look smiling or laughing, and, wishing to produce this *phenomenon*, pinched her arm, pulled her hair, &c., and at last elicited a solitary smile, which, however, conveyed no corresponding expression to the eyes.

Chardin says that the complexion of the Georgians is the most beautiful in all the East, and that he never saw an ill-favoured countenance in the country. "I have seen," he adds, "those that have had angels' faces, so that it is impossible to behold them without falling in love. They are tall, clean limbed, plump, and full, but not over fat, and extremely slender in the waist; let them have never so few clothes on, you shall not see their hips.

"—— Georgia is a garden sweet,
And beauty's own romantic seat;
The dark-browed maidens there possess
The boon of perfect loveliness.

Circassian damsels, too, display
Superior charms, and, ever gay,
Chase sorrow from the heart away."

A Georgian girl is often married by the *wish* of her parents at the early age of twelve; for although they are not as formerly so easily smuggled out of the country, yet the Russians are constantly seizing them, to gratify their own gross and vicious inclinations, and, when ordered away, leave no provision whatever for the offspring of such connexions.

Gibbon says, "it is in Georgia that nature has placed, at least to our eyes, the model of beauty, in the shape of the limbs, the colour of the skin, the symmetry of the features, and the expression of the countenance. The men are formed for action, and the women for love." Yet the most accurate of all the ancient historians, Herodotus, declares, that the natives in his time were dark-complexioned (*μελανοχροες*), and had crisp curling hair (*οὐλοθρικές*): such is the change produced by the mixture of nations,

and the slow but powerful influence of climate. Their great delight is in bathing, shampooing, and sipping coffee, which at Tiflis may be enjoyed to perfection. The baths are situated on the banks of the Koor, and are impregnated with sulphurated hydrogen. Their temperature is 112° of Fahrenheit.

CHAPTER IV.

Kidnappers—Visit to the Imaum's Harem—Splendid Costume—Rich Apartment—Circassian Women—Caucasian Clans—Independence of Georgia—Persian Atrocity—Death of the Tyrant—Persian Emigration—Fallacious Promises—Enormous Avalanche—Population in Georgia—Tiflis—Kajavahs—The Takht-Rawaun.

REGULAR bands of kidnappers were once established throughout the whole of Georgia, whose sole occupation was to surprise and carry away boys and girls for the markets of Constantinople, Cairo, and Teheraun. Some of the latter found their way to Baghdad, and even into the harem of the Imaum of Muscat, who, by the way, has amongst his four hundred ladies some of every clime and country, save Europe. In 1825, when *en route* for Turkish Arabia, we visited Muscat on board his highness's brig of war "Psyche," and Mrs. Mignan was invited to pay a visit to his harem. At this time he had but one *married*

wife, although allowed four, and was in treaty for a princess of Shirauz. Mrs. Mignan, her female servant and I, went to the palace, where his highness was in waiting to receive us. At the conclusion of the usual ceremonies of coffee-sipping and sherbet-drinking, his highness most politely took Mrs. Mignan by the hand (the native servant following), and led her through several parts of the palace, until they came to a door to which was attached a padlock of at least a foot in length. They entered, and ascended by a staircase, at the top of which was a trap-door, with two more of these enormous padlocks, where two handsome young eunuchs awaited their approach. These were the only individuals wearing *men's* clothing who ever obtain the "open sesame," and are admitted within the sacred precincts of the harem. Here commenced the carpeting, of most splendid and laborious workmanship, with raised flowers of every hue, embossed upon the finest quality of kerseymere. A table, covered with every Arabian delicacy,

was laid out at a latticed window overlooking the sea of Oman, before which was placed three English-shaped chairs. Mrs. Mignan was requested to be seated on one, the Imaum took the second, and in unceremoniously glided "Oman's Queen," who seated herself on the vacant one. His mother sat at her feet, and our Hindoostanee ayah (nurse) in the same position, by her own mistress.

"I could not then," to use Mrs. Mignan's own words, "speak a word of Arabic, so that Hindoostanee was the medium of our conversation. All the other females, and a vast number of children of both sexes, stood gazing at me in wonderment from a little distance, as I was the first European lady who had visited their harem. They were richly apparelled, and in a variety of costumes, but none pretty; too many appeared to be corpulent, and those were beautifully fair. 'Son altesse' was *not* good looking; decidedly the plainest I could see. But who on such an occasion could do more than take a very hasty glance in search of personal

beauty, when there was so great a feast for the eyes in the magnificent ornaments of her person? Lacks of rupees would not have purchased half that she wore. One emerald, forming the centre of a necklace composed of emeralds, rubies, and diamonds, was larger than a pigeon's egg. Her feet and ankles were so completely obscured by massive jewelled ornaments, that they needed no other covering. Her arms also, to above the elbow, where a tight sleeve met a tighter body, were encased within a richly embroidered gold kinkob, while a train of dark crimson satin, likewise embroidered in gold, reposed upon the ground. She wore a petticoat of purple satin, in the same style of rich embroidery; and, to complete the *tout ensemble*, a valuable Cachmere shawl crossed her shoulders, and rested on her lap. Over her eyes (all the females present had it also) she wore a frightful thing, which resembled a pair of broad-rimmed spectacles, but made of some kind of stiff cloth, richly worked and spangled with gold. These extraordinary *lunettes* are always worn by the

women whilst in the presence of the Imaum, and thrown off when they are alone. It partly covers the nose, and is tied on behind the head like our own masks.

One of the rooms into which I was taken struck me much, from its extremely rich appearance, having several handsome chandeliers, and alternately windows of stained and pier glass, from the ceiling to the floor, no wainscot being seen, except in one corner of the apartment, where stood a bed. The divan around the room was raised about three inches, covered with the finest Persian carpeting, which closely resembled, both in texture and pattern, the stuff of which the Cachmere shawl is made. A double row of cushions stood there; those next the wall being of the Indian kinkob, whilst the front row were composed of white satin embroidered in gold, with fringes and tassels of the same."

The Imaum of Muscat has some few Circassian ladies, which were conveyed to him *viâ* Baghdad and Bussora, by Circassian

dealers, who trade with such of their countrymen as bring up their *own* children for the Turkish and Egyptian markets. This is of course done by stealth on the northern frontiers of Mount Caucasus, because the Russians use every means in their power to prevent the inhabitants (especially young girls) from quitting the country. Women are actually found, who of their own free will request to be sold. With a view of securing a ready compliance on the part of their relatives, they declare that they have taken an oath to fulfil this resolution, and the respect always paid to such a sacred obligation precludes any opposition being offered to the determination of those who have incurred it. This may at first appear startling; but it is the effect of female *curiosity*, and various other causes; above all, the hope of realizing some little property, and of releasing themselves from a state of constant drudgery and toil, to which all women in Circassia are subjected. Instances have occurred, where some have returned from their trip

to Stamboul free, their Turkish masters having manumitted them; and their descriptions of the delights of the harem, and the presents they bring away, determine other young girls to try a similar fortune. They are certainly very pretty, but their beauty does by no means deserve the reputation it has obtained; and those women who enter the Turkish and Egyptian harems invariably become fat and pury. They are not publicly exposed for sale like the Nubians and Abyssinians, but a purchaser may always obtain a private ticket of access to their exhibition.

Little was known of Georgia until Queen Catherine of notorious memory sent Guldenstaedt to examine the country, and report upon its inhabitants. He enumerates *seven* distinct nations, divided into numerous tribes, all speaking their own dialects. The Caucasian isthmus contains many clans, some of which have not yet been known to us, nor subjugated by the Russians, though their country is considered but a canton of Russia, and is included within the limits of that

huge empire. Although Georgia and Armenia were conquered by Nourchirwaun, invaded by Alp-Arslan, overrun by Timour, ravaged by Ismael, subdued by Tamasp, and retaken from the Turks by Abbas the Great, it never wholly lost its independence, but preserved itself as a kingdom for nearly two thousand years, and retained its ancient faith in Christianity for no less a period than fourteen centuries, although seated in the very centre of countries enthusiastically devoted to the Mahommedan religion. The existing remains of towns and cities, amongst the *debris* of which are discovered gold and silver coins of Media, Parthia, Persia, Greece and Rome, attest the various nations that have anciently been in possession of Georgia.

At the conclusion of the last century Georgia was declared independent, and in 1795, Aga Mahommed Khan, the late eunuch King of Persia, advanced to its capital. His very first act was an order for the slaughter of every human being inhabiting this flourishing town; his next was to set fire to it. Every

excess that hatred and bigotry could dictate, was committed. Pillage, murder, and conflagration, met the eye on every side. While some were occupied in plundering the villas of rich merchants, and others in setting fire to the hamlets, the air was rent with the mingled groans of men, women, and children, who were falling under the daggers of the Persians. The only exception made during the massacre, was of the young women and boys, who were spared to be sold as slaves. Many of the women whose husbands had been butchered, were running to and fro frantic, with torn garments and dishevelled hair, pressing their infants to their breasts, and seeking death as a relief from still greater calamities that awaited them. The number slain, or dragged into slavery in those dreadful days, was not less than twenty thousand.

In the course of the following year, this brutal old eunuch, in order to increase the number of his horrid crimes, determined to revisit Georgia. He passed through Azerbi-jaun, crossed the Araxes, and had reached

the fortress and town of Sheesha, the capital of the fertile district of Karabaugh, when his murderous career was arrested by the hand of violence. Two servants of his Majesty, holding the most menial offices in his camp, whom he had sentenced to death for a trivial offence, knowing there was no chance of a reprieve, entered the royal suite of tents during the night, and, creeping to the spot where the king slept, put an end with their daggers to one of the most cruel tyrants that ever ruled over the kingdom of Persia. It is quite beyond the limits of this work to particularize his cruelties. Suffice it to say, that in the very first year of his government, he deprived no fewer than seventy thousand people of their eyes, and massacred at least a hundred thousand. We all know that even to this day in Persia, they think no more of plucking out an eye, or a tongue, than we do of extracting a tooth.

The Russians have certainly introduced many reforms into Georgia, but as their own peasantry are serfs, they have not yet ven-

tured to liberate others. Until a late date, a Georgian prince could sell his vassals, and execute summary vengeance on his serfs, by mutilation or death. But existing abuses do not deter vast emigrations into Georgia. In the year 1820, alone, not less than ten thousand Persian families crossed the boundary, to whom it was intended to assign lands, and to this day both Turks and Armenians are continually claiming the protection of the Russian Government.—I remember, however, that in the year 1828, when I crossed the Araxes, on my journey to Europe by Russia and Germany, the influx had been so great, that I met thousands of both sexes and all ages, returning again to Persia, execrating the name of Paskewitch, the governor-general of Georgia, to whom they attributed all their misfortunes, and from whom they had received the most flattering but fallacious promises.

Marshal Paskewitch proposed to settle thousands of Armenians on the northern

side of Mount Caucasus; he even *forced* them to quit Persia with his army, promising them houses and lands similar in size and extent to those they had vacated. They accordingly left the Persian territory, and were quartered in several Russian villages bordering the Caucasus, until (as they supposed) settlements were provided. Nothing whatever was done for them. Peace with Persia was proclaimed, and the wanderers were forced to return home, and to find their houses pillaged, and their lands laid waste. It is not generally known that the Armenians hate the Russians even more than they abhor the Mahommedans; they have only one wish—that the British would take them under their protection.

The whole country is prettily diversified with mountain scenery, gradually spreading out into hills and dales wooded with the fir, beech, and oak. The villages are built upon the sloping sides of hills or heights, after the manner of the Koordish hamlets. The vine is extensively cultivated, and immense herds

of swine swarm in every town. The melting of the snows on Mount Caucasus cause floods to pour down from the hills with such violence as to sweep every thing before them. To give some idea of the enormous masses of snow which are constantly thawing during the summer season, I must mention that in my journey across Caucasus, in August, 1828, a mass of frozen snow had detached itself from a neighbouring peak, and shelved down across the pass, covering a ravine to the extent of at least three miles, and rendering the passage very dangerous, and nearly impracticable. This was near the cross mountain, where basaltic porphyry, and schistose peaks, rise to the height of three thousand feet. The road was constructed under the immediate direction of Count Paskewitch. It is practicable during summer for a carriage; and post-horses may be had at every stage right through the whole mountain track.

For a great portion of the year the sky is cloudless and pure. The summers are as hot (in the valleys) as the winters are severe:

in fact, every possible degree of temperature may be had on the sloping spurs of Mount Caucasus.

The total amount of population in Georgia cannot be less than four hundred thousand, of whom seventy-five thousand are Armenians, and another seventy-five thousand Georgian and Russian troops cantoned throughout the districts.

The number of inhabitants are increasing, because they are not now reduced by the dissensions of the chiefs, who used to be eternally warring with each other, and trafficking for the harems of the great. The incursions of the Koords, also, utterly desolated the frontier provinces; and in the year 1603, when that accomplished despot Shah Abbas marched into Georgia, he carried off no less than ten thousand families. It must be added, however, as a striking proof of his beneficial despotism, that instead of making them slaves, compelling them to change their religion, and to undergo circumcision, as his predecessors had done in similar cases, he

colonized them throughout the kingdom, and offered them his protection and patronage. The Armenian colony of Julfa, formed by him at Ispahaun, remains to this very day an honourable monument of his wise and liberal policy. All these drawbacks on population have now entirely ceased, and the Russians have adopted measures for the encouragement of agriculture, which cannot fail to produce the best effects. Tiflis has risen, from a mean and dismal-looking town, into a cheerful, bustling city; and notwithstanding its disadvantageous position, has become a place of great importance. Its trade is on the increase, and its population, which, in the year 1826, was only twenty-six thousand, has risen in four years to thirty-three thousand.

Prince Khosrou having determined to pass through the mountainous district of Karabagh on his way into Persia, and there being no other mode of conveying our servant and children, we were obliged to have a pair of kajavahs constructed by a Georgian carpenter, which turned out no easy job for

him. When first brought to *try on*, they were too large, then too short, then again too cumbersome, until, by dint of patience and perseverance, we got them chiselled to something near the mark. Kajavahs are the commonest kind of litter used for travelling through the most mountainous parts of Persia. In shape they resemble one of those small dog kennels which are daily seen in our own stable yards; they measure about four feet in height, by two in width, and proportionately deep. One of them is strapped on a mule with leathern thongs, in the same manner as a pair of panniers, and they must of course be equally balanced, or a capsize will be the consequence. This conveyance usually accommodates two persons; on the present occasion it had to carry four inside passengers, large and small, for which no extra charge was made, nor any licence infringed. Mules are trained for the express purpose of bearing it, and when these animals are pronounced by the katur-jee (muleteer) as having attained a profi-

ciency in the art of ambling, the motion to a traveller is not unpleasant. But by far the most desirable kind of conveyance is the takht-rawaun, which is like the Indian palankeen, *vulgariter* palki. It has shafts (fore and aft) for two mules, and in this you may have a mattrass and pillows, and recline at full length, which, as my poor wife knows to her discomfort, cannot be done in the kajavah; but a takht-rawaun would have been useless to us over the steep and rugged passes of Karabaugh.

CHAPTER V.

Departure from Tiflis—Ancient Iberia—Subterranean Houses—Inconvenient Intruders—Dreary Region—Tayaz—Zegaum—Ganja—Poverty of the Town—A Yorkshire Gourmand—Mutual Condolences—Manufactures of Ganja—War in Karabaugh—Domination of Russia—Aga Syud Mahomed—His reception at Teheraun—The Plague.

ON the 31st of January, having concluded all our arrangements, we took our leave of Tiflis; most willingly, I admit, for throughout our whole stay the weather had been unpleasantly wet, and the streets nearly impassable. Field-Marshal Paskewitch Erivanski, General Strekaloff, and their whole staff, accompanied the envoy to the gates of the city, and Prince Galitzin, M. le Chevalier Gamba, and several other friends, rode with us far beyond its outer barriers. Great was the amusement of our friends to see Mrs. Mignan sitting *à la Persienne*, in which po-

sition they declared she would not continue for a quarter of an hour. She, nevertheless remained in that painful attitude the whole time they were with us, being at least an hour and a half; but when we had exchanged adieus, and they rode off, she found great difficulty in effecting a change of position, so as to admit of the feet resting on the stirrup-board, which had been fixed, by my direction, to hang down as a supporter for them.

We left the sublime chain of "frosty Caucasus" in the rear, covered with perpetual snows; and, following the course of the sluggish Koor * (the Cyrus of antiquity), in a south-easterly direction, entered at once upon the plains of the ancient Iberia, which lay spread out before us, till lost in the blue haze of distance. The prospect was a most uninteresting and even depressing one, for every passing cloud sprinkled flakes of snow

* This river waters the whole of Georgia, and receives, in its course, numerous tributaries from Caucasus. It joins the Arras (Araxes), and falls into the Caspian.

on our track, and momentarily threatened a heavy fall. Our road wound through a succession of low argillaceous and gravelly hills, at no great distance from the river, near which we saw some remains of Georgian architecture. The village of Saganlook, situated about ten miles distant from Tiflis, was the place marked out for the termination of our first day's march. The houses, if they can be so called, were wretched in the extreme; we could scarcely distinguish them from the inequalities of the surrounding ground—a method of construction adopted, perhaps, on account of the severity of the climate. Their construction corresponded exactly with those mentioned by Xenophon in the *Anabasis*, or expedition of Cyrus into Persia *. The rooms were all beneath the surface of the earth, so that we were obliged to descend by a ladder, or by steps cut out

* Their houses were under ground; the mouth resembling that of a well, but spacious below: there was an entrance dug for the cattle, but the inhabitants descended by ladders. (See Expedition of Cyrus, Book IV., page 280).

of the calcareous sand-stone bank, which formed the side of these sepulchral abodes. In this particular part of Georgia the excavating a hut is a work of easy accomplishment. A circular pit is dug, and with the *débris* and unhewn stones the sides are formed. Over this well-shaped excavation they lay rafters, and on these again, earth. In walking *over* a village, it would be difficult to tell whether you were on a house-top or on the bare ground, if it were not for the circular perforations which are made in the centre of the roofs to admit light and air. All these subterranean habitations are exceedingly dark, and if the aperture overhead be closed, the inmates would be stifled with the smoke of their wood fires, and an unfortunate stranger, in his evening promenade, be *grilled* and *dished* in the course of a few seconds, to the horror of the *cuisinier*, at his sudden *entrée* by the chimney.

One of these chambers was appropriated to us, the inmates having been most unceremoniously turned out for the night.

Our servant had just commenced spreading out the carpets, and laying our bedding upon them, when down rushed a whole squad of goats, donkeys, and sheep, who knew their dormitory much better than we did, and who proceeded to possess themselves of that portion of the dwelling which they always occupied *. In so doing they raised a dust most offensive to persons whose beds were being made on the ground. We were much shocked at the intrusion, but thought it better to let them remain than raise a new dust by endeavouring to eject them.

On quitting this village we bade adieu to the often-travelled Erivan road, on which post-horses are now to be had as far as the Araxes, and descended a narrow ravine into a valley bounded by an inconsiderable, but romantically situated lake. The hills on our right presented the habitations of the peasantry,

* In these houses were goats, cows, and fowls, with their young. All the cattle were maintained within doors with fodder. (Expedition of Cyrus, Book IV., page 281).

which were indicated by packs of ravenous dogs foraging on the offal of their premises. The people appeared miserably poor. On leaving this valley, an abrupt ascent brought us to an open tract of country, which, to the south, was bounded by a flat horizon, while, to the east of our course, the turbid Koor playfully meandered through a fine rich soil, until it was lost in the capricious stratification of the inhospitable-looking mountains. Towards dusk, we reached a post station, where General Rennenkampff took a strong escort of Cossacks, having to go many miles to reach our proposed sojourn for the night.

We had not proceeded more than three or four miles ere it became quite dark; all traces of the road were lost, and we had nothing to prevent our falling over a precipice overhanging the river that was rippling at our side, but the warning murmur of its course. At ten o'clock we reached Beerchaly, a wretched village on the banks of the river Khram, where a fine bridge is still standing, the work of the Romans. Here we obtained

snipes, ducks, and bitterns, in great plenty, for all the Persians were splendid shots. The Shahzadeh betted he would bring down half-a-dozen brace, which bet he soon won, and desired them to be conveyed to us.

Passing through Tasantoo, we ascended a range of mountains, which were rugged, though not of any great altitude. The road up them was scarcely wide enough to admit the kajavahs to pass. We descended by a track of much the same difficulty, which gradually opened out into a valley traversed by a stream running to the north-east. On its banks the remains of an extensive city still exist. After crossing the dry bed of a river, we arrived at Tayaz, where we found warm and comfortable quarters. A supper consisting of apps, eggs, milk, butter, and honey, was set before us. This latter luxury was in great abundance, and is doubtless an article of profit to every village throughout Georgia. The people were very hospitable, and possessed herds of cattle, with plenty of "gommey," or millet.

At seven o'clock in the morning we again set forward, and halted at the Mahommedan village of Zegaum, about ten miles from our last stage. The road was unusually stony and rugged, and the river Algat meandered at a short distance. We met several caravans of mules very heavily laden with bales of merchandise. The poor animals, when lightened of their loads, were allowed to stray about in quest of pasture. The bales were heaped one upon the other, beneath which the muleteers cooked, and sheltered themselves from the cold. We also passed several Georgians carrying immense loads.

On leaving Zegaum, we crossed the Algat, through a deep and rapid ford, and pushed on for Borsoom, distant about twelve miles. The road traversed was execrable, and very muddy. We trusted entirely to the great experience of our mules, which were wonderfully sagacious in selecting paths: but in spite of all their sagacity, they often sank to the girths in holes of mud. We passed the ruins of a very considerable city, where there

was a splendid minaret, and many Armenian inscriptions.

Our road continued south-south-east for twelve more miles, winding through glens, and over an undulating plain without a tree or shrub. At about five miles distance from Ganja, that town is discovered, which, with its numerous and extensive gardens, presented a most agreeable *coup d'œil*. It is seated on a wide spreading plain, whereon many villages are scattered; its natural fertility, and the abundance of its pastures, made it until lately a favourite cantonment of a detachment from the Russian army, when employed in this direction against the Persians. Several hamlets which formerly existed on the plain are now in ruins, and a great portion of the country harbours the pastoral Koords, who migrate for the winter season.

Ganja, or Elizabeth Pol*, as it is called by the Russians, is the first place of any modern note on approaching Persia from the north-west. It is built upon a broad moun-

* Sometimes pronounced *Elisavetpole*.

tain torrent, (spanned by a ruinous brick bridge of six arches), beneath the Aligez mountains, which divide the beautiful province of Karabaugh from that of Erivan. The appellative "Karabaugh" signifies, in the Turkish language, the "Black Garden," implying the richness and fertility of the whole district. I have said that the approach to the town wore an imposing appearance, it being surrounded by enclosures and gardens, resembling an oasis in the desert. As we entered, however, this delusive aspect vanished, and we found ourselves passing through a large maze of utter ruins, abandoned suburbs, and crumbling walls. These concealed the houses from our view, until we passed through a paltry bazaar that extended for some hundred yards, partially occupied by shops of the most needful trades, and these very scantily and miserably supplied. Every thing breathed of poverty and oppression; in fact, with the exception of the house of the Russian commandant, the habitations were deplorable in the extreme. Even the fortress has been

allowed to go to ruin, as the Russians say the climate is too unhealthy for a large military station. This is unaccountable, for the position is certainly high, dry, and open, and free from marsh and jungle.

The principal room in a silk weaver's house was given up to us by order of the Russian commandant, through the kindness of General Rennenkampff. Our Mahomedan host gave us his best carpet, lighted a cheerful fire, and prepared a good supper of fowls and eggs, which were followed by coffee and the chibouque. We found that the luxuries of Tiflis had not at all impaired our relish for this homely fair. Doctor Cormick's servant, Thomas, a Yorkshireman, a bit of a rogue, and *gourmand*, was eternally praying that he might get plenty to eat and drink, and be sent safe home to his wife.

"Well, Thomas, what have you been about to-day?" we inquired, as he entered our apartment.

"Only to the bazaar, Sir, to get something to eat."

“And what did you procure there?”

“A Kabobed goose, which I ate, and found so good, that I told them to get another ready for to-morrow’s march, which I shall carry in my pocket, as I don’t know what I may get further on, and master never thinks of any one but himself.”

His master returned the compliment by declaring that whenever he inquired for Thomas, they told him the glutton was at the bazaar, getting something to eat. It was odd enough to hear the colloquies between Thomas and Mary our woman-servant; how they sighed over the lost comforts of old England, the want of inns, and every kind of ease. They both agreed that in their present mode of life, they were more like “*h*animals” than human beings.

Ganja was an hereditary fief in the family of Jawaunt-Khan Kajar, who opposed the Russians by every means he possessed. He fell when they took the place to prevent the Persians making any advances on Georgia through Karabaugh. The town contains

five thousand inhabitants, who are all Mahomedans of the Shiah sect. The language spoken here is a dialect of the Turkish, but the people read and write the Persian. The manufacture of silk and cotton stuffs is carried on to a great extent. This is for exportation, of course, and a supply is regularly sent to the Russian market; though, as yet, little encouragement is held out. I was told that a small quantity had found its way viâ Persia to Bombay, and that the wealthy and enterprising merchants of that rising presidency had justly appreciated it.

The Ganja people are very hostile to their present governors, from a religious feeling, but the peasantry are favourably disposed to them, as they evade various taxes which were exacted by their ancient rulers.

When the last rash and unequal war broke out between Russia and Persia, the inhabitants of Ganja expelled all the Czar's troops, and joined a division of the Persian army, which Abbas Mirza sent from Sheesha to occupy it. The Persians unfortunately

neglected to repair the fortress, so that it again fell into the hands of the Russians, who have threatened to bring twenty thousand Cossack families from the banks of the Don, to people the now deserted mountains of Karabaugh. Fifteen thousand Dutch ducats per annum is all that Russia can screw out of this province, which formerly yielded at least four hundred thousand.

Karabaugh submitted to Russia in the early part of the present century, after having been the scene of many general actions. Count Zuboff captured Ganja during the reign of the Russian Empress Catherine, but soon evacuated it. General Seseanoff subsequently took it, when, by the mediation of Sir Gore Ouseley, ambassador extraordinary from the court of Great Britain to the Shah of Persia, a pacific treaty was concluded. Persia gave up all her acquisitions south of Mount Caucasus, and Russia agreed to aid the rightful heir to the Persian throne against all usurpers. When the riots in St. Petersburg took place, con-

sequent upon the Grand Duke Constantine's abdication in favour of his brother Nicholas, the court of Teheraun fancied that a civil war had actually broken out in the north, and that the numerous tribes inhabiting the Caucasus had risen *en masse* against the Russians. The Persian chieftains made proposals to his royal highness Abbas Mirza to co-operate with him in a crusade against the Russians, and a moojetehedor (high priest from the holy shrine of Kerbela) exhorted his Persian majesty to this extreme proceeding. The old Syyud called upon the Moollahs to flock around him, and the whole nation listened to their inflammatory orations. The first advance of Abbas Mirza into Karabaugh was crowned with complete success; he annihilated the Russians wherever he met with them; but instead of pursuing them to the very gates of Tiflis, he lay smoking his kaleoon within the fortress of Sheesha, intoxicated with his victory, until the roaring of the Russian cannon disturbed his dreams, and sent him back to Tabriz by-

the "double march." Even that city, the second in political importance in the empire, fell into the hands of Marshal Paskewitch, without a sword having been unsheathed in its defence! The whole country was then, as it now is, within the grasp of Russia, and all this, too, through the rashness of that weak-minded prince Abbas Mirza, who was most thankful to make peace on any terms, or, as a Hindoo rajah would say, "at master's pleasure."

Russia now interferes with Persian affairs *ad libitum*; and England, who might have prevented the aggressive and unjust schemes of the autocrat, looks placidly on the scene, and is quite satisfied with her own innocence and fidelity! A few more years, and she will bitterly reproach her blind and irreparable policy. A gentleman with whom I once travelled, said, "The Russians are now cutting up the Persians—they appear to help themselves to what they please. A fine set of dishes are placed before them; India on one side, China on another; Persia here,

Turkey there. The autocrat slices now at one, then at another: he tickles his palate like a Frenchman at a *table d'hôte*: he cuts at the globe as we should at a melon. I suppose he means to cut and cut till he reaches Calcutta."

The following singular account of the reception given to Aga Syyud Mahomed, the high priest of the holy shrine of Messhed Hussein, at the court of Teheraun, is from an eye-witness, and its insertion in this place may not be without interest to the reader.

"When Aga Syyud Mahomed arrived, a vast number of people, and most of the infantry, without regimentals or arms, went out to meet him. The shah sent his own litter for the holy man, and some princes, and many of the chief people of the court, did honour to his entry. Much enthusiasm was manifested by the populace. To the Syyud's person they could not get access, but they kissed the litter, kissed the ladder by which he ascended to it, and collected the dust which had

the impression of the mule's feet that bore him. The people beat their breasts, and the litter was brought close to the shah's door, that the syyud might alight without being overwhelmed by the multitude. Six or seven of the chief priests entered the court with him, and one of them insisted on going in on his mule. An officer of my acquaintance, who happened to be there on the spot, prevented him. He said that the ordinary attendants of his majesty seemed quite to have lost sight of their duty to their sovereign, and were occupied in paying their devotion to the syyud. The shah came to the door of the court to receive him, and the enthusiasm of the populace seemed to be communicated to the royal hearts, as the shah and the prince royal wept bitterly in speaking of the misfortunes of the faithful under the tyranny of the Russian government. To Aga Syyud Mahomed, and his suite of one thousand Moollahs, were assigned a separate encampment. Two princes, by order of the shah, pitched near him, professedly to pre-

vent the intrusion of the people, but secretly to subdue too general a manifestation of public esteem and consideration. Another strong detachment of holy men came in from Kerbela, covered with winding sheets, and the heads of the religion of most of the principal cities flocked to the capital of the empire.

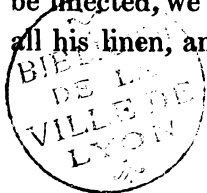
“The shah twice visited the syyud; and on one occasion, his majesty said, ‘I am anxious to shed the small spoonful of blood that remains in my weak body in this holy cause; and it is my wish to have in my winding sheet a written evidence from you, that the inquiring angels may at once recognise my zeal, forgive my sins, and admit, without delay, my entrance into heaven.’”

Aga Syyud Mahomed watched the progress of the campaign with the utmost anxiety, and he no sooner heard of its disastrous results, than he dropped down a dead man!

The plague made its first appearance at Ganja in the year 1805, at Tiflis in 1806, and at Erivan in 1825. From those years down to the period I was in Georgia, the country

had (with the exception of the mountainous districts, which are rarely visited) been regularly afflicted. From this it would appear that the disease is endemial to the Russians, for it is a singular fact, that previously to their occupation of Georgia, the whole country was exempted from this pestilence, which is generally checked by the summer heats and winter frosts. But I may further observe, that among the anomalies of this fearful disease, and which I have before alluded to, is the circumstance of its having raged unchecked in the very severe winter of 1829, throughout nearly all the Caucasian villages. The consequences were of course fatal in a country where no medical practitioners, and therefore no means to lessen the mortality of the disorder, are to be found. Speaking to Prince Galitzin on the subject, whilst we were at Tiflis, he said, "I assure you we do not lose half so many men as you may be inclined to suppose; for whenever a man is reported to be infected, we plunge him in *iced-water*, wash all his linen, and on the second or third day

F 2



he is sure to be convalescent." It has been said that Mahommedanism is never free from plague ("that arrow that flieth by day"*), and that it takes its circuit through the dominions that bow down before the great impostor. If not in Georgia and Circassia, it is in Turkey; if not in Turkey, it scourges Egypt. Stamboul, however, is its head quarters. It enjoys a fatal privilege. Marching steadily onwards, it seizes all, consumes all, until the fuel is exhausted, and the grave quenches its consumption. At the moment when it was supposed to have been almost extinguished in Egypt, it suddenly broke out in India, where it raged (and still rages) with more than its original fierceness. May Divine Providence avert the coming of such an awful visitation to England!

* Psalm, xci. 5.

CHAPTER VI.

Hired Mourners—Abundant Game—Herds of Antelopes—A Successful Shot—Sheesha—Massacre of Russians—Gorouzour—Region of Snow—Pheasants of the Araxes—Boundary Line—Remarks of Napoleon—Ambitious Schemes of Russia—Invasion of India—The Araxes—Baron Rennenkampff—Ancient Bridges—Innumerable Adders—Oriental Encampments.

ON the morning of the 8th of February, we quitted Ganja for Zodi, about four leagues distant. On leaving the town we passed a group of women, who appeared in extreme grief. Approaching nearer, we saw that they were sitting round a grave, and mourning the loss of a deceased relative. Some were weeping aloud, whilst others beat their breasts with great *apparent* violence. These latter were hired for the occasion, a most common practice in Europe and America, as well as in Asia. Scriptural passages prove that the custom is of very great antiquity. “The elders of the daughter of Zion sit upon

the ground, and keep silence; they have cast up dust upon their heads; they have girded themselves with sackcloth: the virgins of Jerusalem hang down their heads to the ground." (Lamentations, ii. 10). The prophet Isaiah thus alludes to the desolation of Judah—"She being desolate, shall sit upon the ground." (Isaiah iii. 26). Many other passages in the Old Testament allude to the custom of hiring people to lament at funerals*. I have read some where or other of it being the practice in Ireland to hire old women to roar and cry; and at the window of every undertaker's shop in London we read the words "*funerals performed!*" It may be added, as a striking fact, that I found, during my travels into Chaldæa, a large Roman coin of copper, that represented Judea under the figure of a woman sitting beneath a palm-tree in the attitude of grief!

* Turn to the sixteenth chapter of Jeremiah, and in Baruch, verse 132—"They roar and cry before the gods, as men do at the feast when one is dead."

We now proceeded over an extensive plain, which had a wild heathy aspect, interspersed with irregular hills of gravel, covered with tufts of dry prickly herbage, and withered aromatic plants, among which were vast numbers of florican, bustard, and the black-breasted partridge (*perdix picta*). The Persians declare that this last bird never roosts, but inhabits the low furze, in the most uncultivated tracts of country. It measures eleven inches. After a ride of several miles, we crossed the Kourak in front of some very snowy hills, which presented one untracked surface. Here, the shahzadeh, who was a keen sportsman, obtained some capital shooting with one of Joe Manton's best guns. We went cheerily on, over a succession of undulating hills and dales, until we reached our halting place for the night about four o'clock P. M.

Whilst Mrs. Mignan and myself were strolling about our encampment, we were joined by Doctor Cormick, who seeing such immense flocks of florican could not resist the

temptation and the pleasure of destroying a few. He went for his gun, and crawling along the ground upon all fours until he got pretty close to a flock, he let fly at them, and down came seven at one shot. Cormick always declared that he could approach as near as he liked to any bird in this manner, but that if he walked upright he never had any sport at all. Our table literally groaned under the wild ducks, partridges, quails, floricans, and bustards, which were daily sent us by the prince and Mr. Cormick. Whoever adopts this route to India, will find many modes of dissipating the tedium of his journey, as game of every description is inconceivably abundant; the streams afford excellent fishing, and salmon, carp, white barbel, and trout, are most plentiful.

We left Zodi about seven the next morning, still traversing the plain in a southerly direction. The country, though so extensive, presented no change in its appearance, except that the hills stood thicker and higher. The

weather was delightfully mild as we passed close along the base of the Aligez mountains*, whose sloping sides were covered with hamlets and enclosures, forming a most agreeable contrast to the barren rocks above. Continuing our march, we saw flocks of mountain sheep, the chamois, and wild goats; and immense herds of antelopes were bounding and skipping across the plain with the rapidity of lightning flashes. I should say there were fifty or sixty at least scurrying into the brushwood; but we soon let slip the dogs, and our steeds having a fine even plain before them, kept well up. The Persians enjoyed the "shikar;" although at full gallop, it was *bang, bang*, right, and left, as fast as they could load. At length, one poor animal finding the dogs gaining upon him, made for the hills with redoubled speed, when Khosrou Mirza, who

* On the summit of this mountain range, sulphur runs in the form of stalactites, which the natives detach, and bring down by musket shot. This kind of sulphur is nearly as transparent as yellow amber.

was in the way as he repassed within musket-shot, fired and wounded him so severely, that the greyhounds were on him before he could traverse another thirty yards. He was placed on the back of a mule, and proved a capital addition to our travelling stock of provisions.

The size of this animal exceeded any I ever saw in India. Its colour was fawn, with a light streak passing from the shoulders to the haunches, and a lighter shade of fawn extending to the belly, which was not so white as the Indian antelope (*Antilope Cervicapra* of Pallas). Its ears were remarkably short, though its horns extended to a great length, and were surrounded by several rings.

We descended due east, over a stony and difficult road, which wound through several rocky defiles; and, crossing the river Terter, reached a small Mahommedan village named Sauk-Boulak. Here we halted for the night, and slept under the roof of a hospitable Musulman: he roasted a sheep *whole*, and gave

us some excellent coffee. On the morning of the 10th we left our kind host, who appeared glad to see us depart, for he was frightened out of his wits by the fierce looks and glittering arms of the envoy's followers. We now set forth over a road leading due south, and passed a little to the westward of Sheesha, the capital of the province of Karabaugh. This city is built on the summit of a lofty mountain, which has a very difficult ascent. Its fortifications enclose the summit of the mountain to an extent of at least four miles, but like every other fortress throughout the country, it has been allowed to fall into decay. The Russians were invited here in the year 1804 by a Persian nobleman, who rebelled against his sovereign, and who was shot by a party of these same Russians, together with two ladies of his harem. They, however disavowed all knowledge of the event, and his son was appointed governor of the province, who continued a faithful ally. Subsequently they compelled *him* to quit the country, and confiscated all his estates. In 1826 the whole

of Karabaugh rose *en masse* against the Russians, who were massacred to a man, but the country was ruined, and since its cession to the Autocrat has fallen both in population and revenue. There are about thirty thousand families at present residing in Karabaugh, mostly Armenians, who have emigrated from northern Persia to reside under the protection of Russia.

On our way past Sheesha, we saw several Cossack stations, where General Rennenkampff changed his baggage horses. These posts consisted of a few miserable straw huts, whose inmates (all of them soldiers) were performing the most menial offices. As we rode along, they took off their caps and saluted us. The peasants followed their example, and looked ridiculous enough with their closely shaved heads.

The weather, which for the last week had been so mild, became suddenly extremely cold and boisterous, with a cloudy sky, and seven degrees of frost. Our road lay over an uneven plain for nine miles, when we ascended

a hill to the south east; and passing over it, came down its opposite side by a romantic lane. We passed along the banks of the river Parianzour, followed its course for two miles, and entered a deep forest. The brush-wood through which we wound was covered to the depth of two feet with snow, and the difficulty our steeds encountered from such insecure footing increased at every step. We now followed the ridge of a chain of rugged hills, exposed to so cold a wind that we could scarcely face it, while the road itself was slippery and dangerous. At the end of about fifteen miles, we reached Gorouzour, where some fresh Cossack horses were taken. We here found the peasants comfortably huddled; the structure of their huts was very simple. Several long rods, driven into the ground at a distance of two feet asunder, enclosing a space about fifteen feet in diameter, composed the outwork. From the top of these, long willow twigs sloped to the centre, tied together with goat or camel hair rope; these formed the frame-work of the roof, over which was

thrown a covering of thick brown felt. A similar casing encircled the sides, and the whole was bound externally with cane-work closely matted together.

On the morrow a region of snow lay spread out before us; hill and valley were encased, as we had ascended considerably for many days past, and the climate had much changed. We hurried on to Koubat, which lay about eighteen miles in a south-westerly direction. It was a wretched place, though whatever the country produced was most freely given. We left the hamlet with the cold at eight degrees of Reaumur, and as we proceeded, came to a narrow valley which gradually contracted into a rocky gorge of very steep and rugged acclivities. At the base ran a stream, whose deep broad bed proved that its waters, in summer, swelled to an impassable height; but at the present moment they were dwindled down to a mere rill, which gurgled amongst rocks and stones, whilst we journeyed by its side, contemplating the beauty of the overhanging cliffs. We

rode along it for upwards of a mile, and then came upon a small plain which appeared to be completely surrounded by lofty mountains. Through an immense chasm to the east, I caught a distinct view of the windings of the Araxes. Herds of antelopes were bounding over the precipitous sides of the mountains, and pheasants, which are seldom seen to the south of this river, were in great numbers. This beautiful inhabitant of the banks of the Araxes deserves to be particularly noticed. When full grown, its length is about two feet and a half. The wings, from the shoulder to the extreme end, measure eight inches; length of beak, from the gape to the tip, an inch and an half, and the tail thirteen inches. Its arched beak is as hard as the rock; the space around the eye is studded with numerous papillæ of a bright red colour; the back of the neck is grey, and barred with innumerable black lines, which vary in breadth. Its breast and belly are black, and its tail, which is most gracefully curved, has both black and white feathers.

Its legs are red, and furnished with round sharp spurs.

An hour and a half more brought us to the margin of the Araxes*, near the fine old bridge of Khuda Auferine; at which point the power of the grasping Czar ceases, for the present. How long this may continue to be the boundary line between Persia and Russia, and whether it be politic for us still to remain inactive spectators of these rapid advances and encroachments of the Russians, instead of checking their course, requires our most serious consideration. I may, however, remark in this place, that very great strides towards the seizure and occupation of the whole of northern Persia are in actual contemplation. Russia is too mighty

* The limits of Armenia, as it had been ceded to the Emperor Maurice, extended as far as the Araxes: the river submitted to the *indignation* of a bridge, and Heraclius, in the footsteps of Mark Antony, advanced towards the city of Tauris, or Gandzaca, the ancient and modern capital of one of the provinces of Media. (*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, chap. xlv. p. 811).

to remain at rest ; she must go on increasing, or she will shake to pieces!

Every one remembers the interview between Napoleon and Mr. Ellis, at St. Helena. The ex-emperor commenced this subject by saying—

“ Eh bien, comment se porte mon ami le Shah? It was I, who shewed you the way to Persia. What have the Russians been doing lately in that quarter?”

On being informed that the result of the late war had been the cession of all the territory in the military occupation of their troops, he said:—

“ Yes, Russia is the power now most to be dreaded. Alexander may have whatever army he pleases. Unlike the French and English, the subjects of the Russian empire improve their condition by becoming soldiers. If I called on a Frenchman to quit his country, I required him to abandon his happiness. The Russian, on the contrary, is a slave while a peasant, but becomes free and respectable when a soldier. Their

immense bodies of Cossacks are also formidable; their mode of travelling resembles the Bedouins of the desert; they advance with confidence into the most unknown regions."

Many years cannot possibly elapse before a consummation of these notions shall be brought about, for the facility with which Russia might permanently post herself in Persia is quite surprising. Her insulting remark, "We will negotiate with the English at Bombay," is of course mere bravado; but be the intention of her government what it may, all Russian officers, during our association with them, spoke of the final possession of *hostile* Persia as an ultimate object of her policy; and if we are wise, and study our political interests, we should firmly oppose and annihilate this dangerous policy, and all those ambitious schemes which have already led her myriads of barbaric horsemen into Turkey and Circassia—into Georgia and northern Persia.

On the subject of a Russian invasion of India, through Persia and Bokhara, a late

number of Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine contains some very striking remarks. "Final possession," says the reviewer, "of the golden peninsula would be impossible, but a Russian invasion must produce hazard and havoc incalculable. No native Russian army could meet the powerful and disciplined force which holds British India. Pitched battles would rapidly show the inferiority of the Russian serf to the British soldier, or even to the Indian led on by British bravery. But it would be a war, not of science, but of universal confusion, not of brave men in the fair field, but of barbarians, untameable as their own storms and snows, overwhelming the whole territory in one vast wave. The troops of Timour and Gengiz are lying idle in the desert. But India is their natural prey. The sound of the Russian trumpet, that called them in our time even to the remote and iron struggle with France, and was echoed from both sides of the Ural, would be obeyed with still fiercer exultation when it called them to the near and luxurious spoil of India, the land of their

hereditary triumphs, and bound up with all their remembrances of the great chieftains who had made the Tartar spear the terror of the world. An inexhaustible population, of which every man is a soldier, would be poured into the bosom of India. The country now lies like a great sea in a reluctant calm. But its nature is agitation; and the first plunge of the Tartar tribes from the ridge of the Himmaleh would rouse every clan and province, from the mountains of Cape Comorin, into a clash and convulsion of war, indescribable and immeasurable."

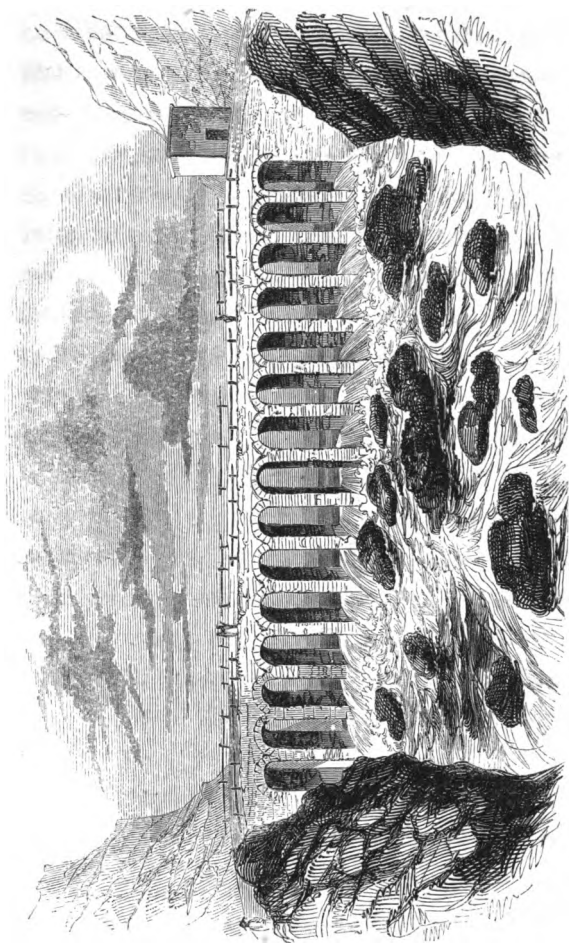
Through the kindness of Prince Khosrou's Russian mehmaundar, we were accommodated in tents pitched upon the banks of the river Araxes, as on neither side were any villages situated. From this point the stream takes a direction nearly east, and is quite shut in by the mountains of Karabaugh on the left bank, and those of Karadaugh on the right. It is studded with islands, which belong to the party to whose banks they are nearest. Hence, those situated by the right bank are the property of Persia, whilst those

on the left bank are claimed by Russia. From the verge of the stream I observed that its utmost velocity in the most obstructed channels was about five miles the hour; while through the broad and shallow passages the river ran at the rate of three miles only, in proportion to its depth. There are many shallows from September until March; but from April until August, the Araxes is nowhere fordable.

General Baron Rennenkampff, took leave of our party at this point. The envoy presented him with a bag containing twelve hundred ducats, and two pair of handsome Cashmere shawls. The baron's polite attentions to the whole suite were unremitting throughout. I beg thus publicly to record my gratitude for all his kindness to us. He was very desirous to cross the boundary line, and to accompany us to the court of his Royal Highness Prince Abbas Mirza, with the view of forming the acquaintance of our highly respected ambassador Sir John Kinneir; but the orders of the emperor were so

positive, he could not even transport the shahzadeh's carriage *across* the river. His fear, also, of being more favourable to the Persian court than to his own employers was excessive. Born a Livonian, he was eyed with envy and jealousy by all his inferiors in rank, who, if any opportunity served them, would doubtless have endeavoured to injure his good name and interest with the government. On bidding us farewell, and pressing my hand, he said—"As the emperor has every confidence in me at present I must try to retain it; the Russians hate all my countrymen most cordially, because some of us hold the best appointments in the empire."

It was a lovely morning when we "broke ground," and quitted our encampment to cross the Araxes. On reaching its picturesque banks, we found the river about three hundred and fifty feet broad. We passed over the bridge of Khuda Auferine, erected on a ridge of rocks over which the river falls. The descent is gradual, and the fall itself does not exceed five or six feet.



BRIDGE OVER THE ARAXES.

The vestiges of a second bridge stood a short way above this, and, like it, was also built upon a ridge of rocks, over which the river dashed at the rate of about seven miles an hour, and had worn their surface to a smoothness of polish which art could scarcely give. The infinite variety of their positions reflected the rays of an unclouded sun from every point like dark steel mirrors*.

A little to the eastward lies the great desert of Mogaum†, situated in the district of Burzund, which, during the months of June and July, is nearly impassable from the innumerable adders which cover its surface. Plutarch says, that when Pompey the Great

* The river Araxes is noisy, rapid, and vehement, and, with the melting of the snows, irresistible: the strongest and most massy bridges are swept away by the current; and its *indignation* (et pontem indignatus Araxes. Virg. *Æneid.* lib. viii. v. 728) is attested by the ruins of many arches near the old town of Zulfa. (*Voyages de Chardin*, tom. i. p. 252).

† The heath of Mogaum, lying between the Koor and the Araxes, is sixty parasangs in length, and twenty in breadth. (*Olearius*, page 1023).

had overcome the Albanians, he wished to pursue them to the shores of the Caspian, but was reluctantly obliged to abandon his design, in consequence of the immense number of snakes which covered the intervening plain*. Gibbon, however, doubts the existence of venomous reptiles on this heath, as related by Pliny; but the fact is notorious. It was the favourite encampment of many an Oriental prince †.

* Pompey designed to make his way to the Caspian Sea, and march by its coasts into Hyrcania; but he found the number of venomous serpents so troublesome, that he was forced to return, when three days' march more would have carried him as far as he proposed. (Vide Plutarch's Life of Pompey. Vol. iv. p. 159).

† See the Encampments of Nadir Shah, and Timour, translated from Persian manuscripts by Sir William Jones.

CHAPTER VII.

Wild Country—Village of Khomorloo—View of the Araxes—Approach to Molaun—Miserable Hamlet—Mountain Track—Sublime View—An Accident—Dangerous Spot—Plain of Ahar—Town of Ahar—Persian Excesses—"Hara" of Scripture—Volcanic Mountain—Tomb on its Summit—Astrological Divination—Wretched Quarters—Approach to Tabriz—Mahommed Ali Khan—His English Wife—Russian Diplomats.

ON leaving the Araxes, the country assumed an awfully wild aspect. It consisted of lofty mountains, split asunder by narrow craggy ravines, and wooded valleys accessible only through rocky gorges and defiles. Its natural strength is indescribably great, and its inhabitants have always preserved a partial independence. They have been often defeated, but never subdued; and, although tributary to Abbas Mirza, the Governor of Azerbaijan, are in general free. In fact the country is almost impracticable, and of very easy defence.

Having traversed a narrow plain on the

river's border, of about three miles in extent, we arrived at the foot of a steep bank, which we ascended, and travelled on a fersung, or four miles further, in a southerly direction, when we gladly saw the village of Khomorloo, situated upon a deep ravine, between steep calcareous and barren mountains. The dwellings of the villagers were scooped from the sides of a mountain, which formed three sides of each hut, the fourth being a wall of mud, in which an aperture of four feet square was left, and a few miserable planks tied together served for the door: the whole covered over by rafters, and a thin coating of flat thatch. They had the character of being plunderers and assassins, but excused their depredations by pretending that the whole country were at war with them. Had we not been with the prince, we dared not have trusted to their hospitality. They appeared the poorest people we had yet seen. Both sexes were clad in rags, and the children to the age of seven were *tous nuds*. They possessed a few sheep and goats, and a good supply of grapes, which

they had preserved all the winter: these had the same bloom and freshness as though they had been recently plucked; the stalks alone were withered. The villagers preserved them in caverns, each bunch being tied and hung separately. The vines grew between the clefts of the rocks, also the wild rose, wild plum, the barberry, raspberry, and jasmine, which is used for making chibouques.

I ascended a lofty eminence behind the village, which commanded an admirable view of the Araxes. No outlet for the stream appeared in any direction; the bending of the river's banks enclosing the opposite points, gave it the appearance of a lake completely land-locked, while detached rocks, rising at a distance in a pyramidal form, increased the beauty of the prospect.

Quitting these poor borderers, who were ground and crushed by the envoy's followers like corn between the upper and nether millstones, we proceeded in an easterly direction, crossing the bed of a river, or rather a mountain torrent, in which the actual stream of water when we passed was not above twelve

feet in breadth, though the channel itself was at least a hundred. It appeared to wind towards the Araxes, into which river it must disembogue itself, at about twelve miles to the eastward of the old bridge.

We travelled onwards to a village called Molaun, about seventeen miles to the southward of Khomorloo. The general direction of the track was to the eastward of south. The country continued singularly wild; indeed, our path, for there was no road, lay over a succession of mountains, which stretched in continual lines as far as the view extended. The rocks were nearly denuded of soil: a few bushes of the melancholy though beautiful wild cypress, and some stunted oaks, comprised the whole of the vegetable world at this bleak season. The approach to the village was very rugged and dangerous for our yaboos* and mules. From this place the direction of our road varied from south-east to south-south-east for a distance of twelve miles, to the hamlet of Rooswar, which

* Yaboo, a stout pony used like mules for carrying burdens.

stood in a gloomy and desolate valley. Not a tree or shrub marked the course of the stream which supplied the inhabitants with water. All bespoke misery and distrust. The surrounding hills were infested by a number of predatory tribes. Our host, whose poverty was perhaps his greatest crime, told us that he had lost his daughter on the preceding night. The robbers had stolen her in lieu of tribute! At this place, we certainly had an opportunity of observing the extreme misery of the peasantry, who, in addition to heavy taxes by which they were already oppressed, were subject to such perpetual depredation from freebooters, that those who were not already ruined by contribution and pillage, found it prudent to assume an appearance of the most abject wretchedness, as their only security against further exactions.

We found the people always ready to give whatever they possessed. Hesitation would only have brought on them the ill-usage of the envoy's followers. His excellency gave us *carte blanche*, to help ourselves to what-

ever we fancied—all our supplies were provided gratis.

Our track still lay over an uninterrupted succession of mountains, and was almost impracticable for loaded cattle. Caravans never attempt this line of route. They enter Persia by Erivan and Nackshiwaun*, the plains of Ararat, and Morund, which is said to represent the ancient city of Moranda. The second mother of mankind, the wife of Noah, is supposed to be interred here.

We continued ascending until mid-day,

* Erivan is an Armenian word, which signifies “discovered,” or “they appear.” From this quarter Noah saw the loftiest peak of Ararat rising above the waters of the deluge. (Genesis, viii. 5.) Nackshiwaun, also, is regarded by the Armenians as the most ancient city in the world, and as having been the first abode of the human race, founded and inhabited by the patriarch Noah and his children after the deluge, when they left the ark on Mount Ararat. Some traces of the national tradition are to be found in a passage of Josephus, who says, that the place where Noah and his family fixed themselves, on quitting the ark, is called by the inhabitants “Apobarition,” which is nearly a translation of the word Nackshiwaun.

when, on reaching the summit of the loftiest peak, a most beautiful scene suddenly and unexpectedly burst upon our view. Far in the rear, successive ranges of fantastically shaped mountains sloped gradually down to the more level country which marked the banks of the Araxes. Upon the extreme and broken line of the horizon, the lofty hills of the fruitful province of Karabaugh arose in towering grandeur, whilst immense piles of rock in the foreground, appearing as if they had been flung by some volcanic action into the air, completed the sublimity of the scene. The general direction of these ranges seemed nearly east and west; their outlines in Karabaugh were more even, and their summits less elevated than those of Karadaugh; for we saw no snow on the former, whereas the latter presented extensive patches of the purest white. The northern sides of both these ridges might, however, be more thickly covered with snow, from their being less exposed to the dissolving influence of the sun. The great eastern plain

of Mogaum presented an horizon like the sea, broken only by small eminences arising like cliffs and islets out of the seeming water.

We continued to pass some barren hills, and felt the weather excessively keen. Our beards were frozen, and the nostrils of the baggage-horses completely choked up with ice-balls, which compelled us to halt continually and rub them off. I cannot describe what we suffered from thirst, and the dazzling reflection of the sun's rays upon the snow. It tanned our faces to such a degree, that we could not wash without suffering much pain. The baggage-cattle were always kept in the rear to prevent any obstruction being offered to our advance; but by some unknown chance, at a broad part of the track, one of the yaboos had preceded the cavalcade, and was just in advance of Mrs. Mignan's horse, when in a moment, and without a struggle, it fell down a perpendicular precipice of several hundred feet. Mrs. Mignan instantly stopped, and waited until I dismounted to assist her down, as the

path was so worn away that, had even no accident happened, she would have been afraid to pass so dangerous a spot. Indeed, every one of the Persian horsemen dismounted here. The drivers were obliged to retrace their steps for a great distance, until they found a place where they could descend to recover the load, which was a box containing the body of one of the suite who had died before we reached Tiflis, and who, having been well spiced by the prince's *maitre de cuisine*, was now on his way to "holy ground" for interment.

It was high noon when we arrived at a small village called Dombry, where we were served with lubbun, or curdled sour milk. In three hours from Dombry, we descended the rugged mountains which bound the northern face of the Ahar plain. The ranges appeared to be a branch of Mount Caucasus, whose ramifications encircle the territories of Erivan and Nackshiwaun, and here took an easterly direction. About three miles to the southward we saw a few trees standing on the brow of a

hill. These we were told surrounded the town of Ahar, and were now remarkable objects; for, since leaving the shores of the Araxes, with the exception of a few hilly tracks in the vicinity of Rooswar, we had scarcely seen a tree. We wound along the plain of Ahar for nearly an hour, and opened a full view of a river winding to the westward. Descending more to the south, over deep snow, we came near the water's edge. Here was a ruined building, with a domed top, and some arches in its walls: it was perhaps a Mahomedan tomb. We went hence to the westward, along the northern bank of the stream, over a flat shelving shore, when we came immediately opposite to Ahar, which stands on the southern side of the river.

We found no difficulty in crossing, for the greatest depth did not appear to be more than five feet. Its waters were extremely turbid, more so than those of the Koor, and much their inferior in taste, although sufficiently wholesome for culinary purposes. The town of Ahar is the capital of Karadaugh, or

the "Black Mountain," as the whole district is designated. It contains about six hundred houses, and from five to six thousand inhabitants. Its streets are narrow, but clean; and many of its houses are adorned with Persian inscriptions bearing the dates of their erection. There is a burial ground on the southern side of the town, with cypresses thinly scattered over its extent; the tombstones were mostly fallen, and worn with age. The town is under the dominion of his Royal Highness Prince Abbas Mirza, and is governed by his eldest son Mahommed Mirza, who then had only a few personal attendants. The reception he gave his younger brother was like that of a slave to his master, and the manner in which this "sprig of nobility" treated his entertainer in return, was quite *à la Persienne*; or, in other words, much in the spirit of the despotic shah whom he served. The quarters which were provided for us were most excellent, and our host, a lively and intelligent Persian holding the office of *ferosh bashee* to the governor,

gave us the best of every thing. He was most anxious to hear how his countrymen had behaved during their late mission, and, on my assuring him that they all got dead drunk every night of their lives, he exclaimed, "Would to God, Prince Khosrou had permitted me to accompany him! what delights I have lost! In your company I might have committed any excesses with impunity!" I told him the debauchees of Europe would have stood no chance with the young prince, and that his proceedings since we had crossed the frontiers had been confined to sheep-stealing and village-plundering. These little foibles had been perpetrated in so genteel a manner that they only gave *éclat* to his pedigree. Our host remarked with a laugh, that such practices were the inevitable consequences of his calling, and that all the Kujur family, including the old shah himself, had indulged in them before. He seemed to think that the axiom "*Il faut vivre*" was a very compulsory one in Persia.

I inquired if the prince royal had been lately performing the same sort of achievements?

“Even so,” replied my host; “his highness has been gathering in his due to pay the troops.” “You mean,” I rejoined, “for the support of his numerous harems. May he reap an abundant harvest.”

“God’s will be done,” continued the Persian, “a few hundred men can do any thing.” In this, however, he was woefully mistaken, for we afterwards heard that the “few hundred men” had been attacked by a superior force from the hills, and nearly the whole of his highness’s “*posse comitatus*” laid on the field. So much for rent-collecting in Persia.

The height of Ahar above the level of the Caspian Sea, cannot be less than five thousand feet. Morier thinks that it represents the Hara of Scripture. “And the God of Israel stirred up the spirit of Pul king of Assyria, and the spirit of Tilgath-Pilneser king of Assyria, and he carried them away, even the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and

the half tribe of Manasseh, and brought them unto Halah, and Habor, and HARA, and to the river Gozan, unto this day." (1 Chron. v. 26.)

Our position appeared so close to the celebrated volcanic mountain called Savallan, that I wished to attempt its ascent, but the villagers assured me it was at least thirty-five miles off, and that there was no regular road leading to it. The Persians have a great veneration for it, and its name is said to be derived from a descendant of the Prophet. They add, that his body still lies in one of its chasms, in high preservation. I have since heard from Mr. James Prinsep, the talented editor of the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, that Lieutenant-Colonel Shee, commandant of the British detachment in Persia, effected its ascent, and that, after a scramble of five hours, he reached the summit. On the top of the mountain he found a tomb in which was the skeleton of a man lying with his head and body inclining to the right side (turning towards Mecca); the front

half of the skull, the left collar bone, the left arm, from the shoulder to the elbow, with four ribs on the left side, were alone visible: some dried flesh and pieces of the winding sheet were still adhering to the skeleton. The remainder of the body was buried in ice and earth. The skull was perfect, except some of the front teeth, which were lying about the tomb; twenty teeth were still in their places, perfectly even and beautifully white. Many of the wandering tribes declare that on the summit of Mount Savallan the ark of Noah rested, and they describe the curiosities around it as being very numerous. Savallan is the loftiest mountain in Northern Persia, it stands thirteen thousand feet above the level of the Caspian Sea; its peak is surmounted with a wreath of snow, whose border is beautifully fringed and fantastically shaped.

Whilst we were smoking our kaleoons immediately before Savallan, with a bright moon throwing her silver touches along the line of its rugged points, I was apprised that

the prince's astrologer * had been examining the stars, and that, according to his divination, the suite could not "break ground" until the expiration of *seventy hours*. It was then to quit the gates at midnight, to enable the envoy to enter his father's capital precisely three hours and a half after sunrise, that being the lucky moment according to astrological calculation. This caused me to arrange our own movements so as to complete the remainder of the journey alone, and we left Ahar at noon on the 22d of February, amidst a thick mist, which at this time of the year was common to northern Persia.

* The influence which astrology has over the minds of all Orientals is too well known to require a particular notice in this place. But it may be as well to say that the science is a very profitable one in Persia. Sir John Malcolm, in the second volume of his *History of Persia*, mentions an instance of a Persian ambassador, who, when about to embark for India, was compelled by his astrologer to throw down several high walls, in order that he might be enabled to quit the town without facing an *invisible* constellation, which would in such a case have marred his good fortune.

After having passed the suburbs, the fog cleared off, when we crossed the plain in a westerly direction. Upon our left appeared the lofty Savallan with its snow-covered walls of rock. Although the sun's last beams had quitted our airy position, they still illumined the peak which

“ ————— stood before us
A mount of snow fretted with golden pinnacles.”

At nightfall we reached a hamlet seated on an eminence called Shehruk, and halted for the night. The people here spoke the Turkish language, and appeared much chagrined on finding we could not converse with them.

Our next day's menzil was made at Khojah, likewise seated on a hill, and beside a salt stream, the property of our friend Mirza Baba, *hakim bashee* to the Mission. Our quarters here were most wretched, and, to complete our entire misery, the fleas, which had been our constant tormentors, were as voracious as bull-dogs; we could find nothing to prevent their biting us the whole

night, though the people spoke of a strong scented grass which drove them away. The Asiatic, however, suffers very slightly from their sting; the blood of the European is decidedly preferred.

On the 24th, we started early for Tabriz. The weather continued so very cold, that whatever was moistened by the breath immediately became ice. My hair and mustachios were hung with icicles, literally verifying the words of the poet:—

“*Stiriaque impexis induruit horrida barbis.*”

We crossed a salt desert, through which several brackish streams flowed. The whole tract appeared as if it had been recently abandoned by the ocean. The latter part of the march was unusually rugged; I can remember no country that exceeds in difficulty the mountain ranges of Karadaugh.

On reaching the gates of Tabriz, we were met by my excellent friend Major Hart, generalissimo of the Persian army, who accompanied us to a residence, which he had en-

gaged for us, of Mahommed Ali Khan, a noble of Persia, as, in consequence of the increased indisposition of Sir John Kinneir, he was unable to receive us into his palace.

The khan had spent many years in England, to learn the art of gun-making, under Wilkinson of Pall-mall ; and Major Hart told me he had shewn great skill and ability in his profession. His late Majesty George the Fourth had, with his usual munificence, given the khan four hundred guineas for a twisted gun-barrel, executed in imitation of the beautiful workmanship of Damascus.

Before he returned to Persia he married an Englishwoman, whom we now saw. Although permitted to receive the visits of all British travellers, she was obliged to conform to the customs of Islamism. We found her utterly destitute of the personal charms of our western *Peris*, so much esteemed by the good taste of the Persians.

She passed nearly the whole of her time with the princesses of the royal harem, and had an only daughter, who it was agreed

should marry one of the younger branches of the prince royal's family. This young girl was very good looking, and, like her father, a strict Mahommedan.

Mrs. Mahommed Ali felt anxious to revisit her native country, to which the khan was not averse. He agreed that during her absence she should receive from him three hundred pounds per annum; but, said he, "I know your people better than you do. You will be very unhappy; you want to shew them your collection of dresses and shawls with which the princesses have presented you; if you don't give them all up to your relations, and spend plenty of money upon them, they will pay you no attention, nor even be glad to see you." He added, "You will no sooner reach England than you will wish to return here again: what do you suppose the English people know or care about the Persian harems?"

We found a large assemblage here, Sir Henry and Lady Willock, their brothers Major (Madras cavalry) and Captain Willock, of the royal navy, Doctor and Mrs.

M'Neil, Sir John and Lady Campbell, Captains Macdonald, Conolly, Strong, Chalon, and others of the army of India. The *corps diplomatique* of the Russian government, headed by Prince Dolgoruckii, were even more numerous than the whole of our party, and the national feeling of these "innocents" led them to devote their best energies to weaken the political importance we *once* unflinchingly possessed in a superlative degree throughout this extensive kingdom. It is now, I fear, all *up* with us here.

CHAPTER VIII.

Antiquity of Tabriz—Its Population—Cowardly Chiefs—Major Hart—Abbas Mirza's Army—Russian Intrigue—English Policy—Russian Ambition—Augmentation of Russian Territory—Russian Ascendency—English Apathy—Russia Accessible—Russian Vanity—Military Boasting—The Russian Empire—Russia and Persia—Policy of the Georgians—Hostility to Russia—The Russian Army—Coalition against Russia.

THE antiquity of Tabriz, or Tauris, as it is universally called by foreigners, is very great, and the extent of its ruins prodigious. Out of two hundred and fifty mosques mentioned by Sir John Chardin, the remains of three only are to be traced. The finest of these, and the highest in Persia (upwards of one hundred feet), is that of *Ali Kojā*, erected by him at least six hundred years ago. When Chardin visited it, the city alone contained five hundred and fifty thousand persons:—
 “J’ai fait beaucoup de diligence pour apprendre à combien se monte le nombre des habitans de Tauris; je ne pouvais pourtant pas le savoir au juste: mais je pense qu’on

peut dire sûrement qu'il va à 550 mille personnes*." At present the whole province of Azerbijaun (the richest and most fertile in Persia) could not muster more. Such is the effect of storm and time, spoliation by power, and destruction by earthquake. Gibbon says, that instead of half a million of inhabitants which have been ascribed to Tauris, under the reign of the Sophys, the city contained no more than three thousand houses; but the value of the royal treasures was enhanced by a tradition that they were the spoils of Cræsus, which had been transported by Cyrus from the citadel of Sardes. Chardin ascribes the foundation of this city to Zobeide, the wife of the famous Kaliff Haroun-al-Raschid; but it is much more ancient, and the names of Gandzaca, Gazaca, and Gaza, are expressive of the royal treasure†.

* Chardin, *Voyage de Paris à Ispahan*, p. 184.

† Gibbon's *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, chap. xlv. p. 811. Youngman, 1830.

The court of his Royal Highness Abbas Mirza, prince royal of Persia, is held in this city. Of the fifty-five sons of his Persian majesty, the heir apparent to the throne is the only one who ever successfully attempted to raise a regular army. It continued in a most efficient state until the chiefs (who are the curses of the country) submitted to Count Paskewitch. These chiefs are the greatest cowards in Persia. When Paskewitch was in full march towards the city, and had arrived in sight of its walls, the chiefs swore upon the Koran that if the marshal entered Tabriz it should be over their own corse; that they would contend the ground with him inch by inch, and fight to the last man; yet no sooner had he reached the gates, than they threw them open for his admission, and congratulated him on his safe arrival. The first request which General Paskewitch made to our minister at the court of Teheraun was, that Major Hart should have no written or personal communications with Prince Abbas Mirza, and also,

that he was not to appear in public so long as the Russian forces might continue in possession of Tabriz. This request was communicated by our envoy to the gallant major, desiring it should be complied with, much to his disgust.

The short-sighted government of Persia can see no use in entertaining men who are not absolutely required, and has disbanded nearly the whole army, retaining only a few Russian deserters. The serviceable part of the establishment, however, consists of three British officers (Colonel Shee, Lieutenants Burgess and Christian) and eight serjeants, all of whom are under the immediate command of Major Isaac Hart, of her Majesty's 65th regiment of foot. Notwithstanding the insuperable difficulties which this indefatigable officer has encountered, he has single-handedly organised and held together all the troops of the prince royal; and for the last *sixteen* years, the name of HART has been the terror of every Russian soldier stationed on the frontier. The artillery has always been the most

efficient part of Abbas Mirza's army, and the infantry has been cantoned throughout the districts. The amount of the general disciplined force under the command of Major Hart, which *might* be collected, is about ten thousand men. Previously to the late disastrous war, fifteen battalions, each one thousand strong, were regularly clothed, equipped, and fed by his royal highness, together with nearly ten thousand irregulars, or Tuf-fungches: these are foot soldiers, armed with matchlocks, who are only *nominally* ready at a call, being dispersed throughout their own villages, where they are obliged to convert the sword into the plough-share to support their families. From the government they receive little or no pay; we cannot, therefore, be surprised at their never having evinced much readiness for field service, or any great firmness in action, especially as their wives and children are left, during their absence, totally unprovided with even the common necessities of life.

The introduction of our military tactics

and discipline into this country would long since have been superseded by those of Russia, had it not been for the unceasing exertions of Major Hart; and, when we take into account the horrid depravity into which Abbas Mirza has lately fallen, and his avaricious habits, it becomes a marvel how he continues to retain any forces at all: it may be added, as a fact, that the Russian government instructed its consul-general at Tabriz to offer the major a very large sum if he would quit the country. Count Paskewitch is so exceedingly jealous of our influence and intimacy with Persia and its government, and so anxious to dislodge us therefrom, that he actually tendered officers to drill the troops entirely at the expense of his own employers; and had it not been for Major Hart's local influence, the Persians would have accepted of their services. When this officer quits Persia, the whole army must swarm with Russians, whose ambassador will not fail to gain an effectual ascendancy.

Is this to be wondered at? The prince

royal has entreated the Indian governments to grant him officers upon their former terms. They would not listen to him; so that eventually he must accept the services of Russia. When that day arrives, our influence in Persia ceases, *perhaps* for ever.

I feel no hesitation in asserting that our interests in Persia have, through ignorance, timidity, or apathy, been grossly neglected or misunderstood. To judge from the vacillating and contradictory nature of our political proceedings in that country, it baffles human ingenuity to understand what our policy can really have been. Ostensibly, at least, our object has been to arrest the march of Russian ambition. Were we serious in our determination to curb the ambition of Russia, — did we really know *her* weakness, *our* own strength, and the political position and resources of these countries — we should at once declare to Russia that her boundary is the Cuban, beyond which she must not pass. She has no justifiable ground whatever for advancing her frontier to the Araxes, and for

possessing herself of the richest Persian provinces. When she advanced upon Circassia and Georgia, she attempted to justify her encroachment by asserting, that the predatory habits of those countries deserved punishment. This was mere pretence. Circassia and Georgia scarcely border upon her frontier at all: with the latter she finds it convenient to be at peace; but although the former wishes for a cessation of hostilities, she refuses all quarter, and requires its absolute subjugation. The cause is sufficiently obvious; by possessing the coast, Russia will eventually detach the whole of the Circassian tribes from every other connexion, so that they shall be incorporated with the rest of her empire, and her arms and commerce left in undisputed possession of the field.

At a period like the present, when a Russian army of one hundred thousand men, under the command of Field-marshal Count Paskevitch, is ordered to assemble on the frontiers of Mount Caucasus for field service*, it may

* See the *Times* newspaper for the month of May, 1838.

not, perhaps, be considered inopportune to submit in this place a few observations made during two successive visits to Russia, on the present political state, as well as a plan for the attack; of that empire. Of the feasibility of their invading the north-western frontiers of India I shall speak elsewhere.

The Russian empire, *in toto*, presents a most extraordinary appearance. It consists of innumerable tribes and nations, who speak a great variety of languages. The two-headed eagle has stretched forth her talons to the north and south, to the east and west; has pounced upon her prey, and has held it fast in the grasp of despotism. For some hundred years, Russia has never been at rest, except for a period suitable to prepare her future means of attack, and await her projected aggrandizement. She has added province to province, principality to principality, and kingdom to kingdom; so that she has gradually augmented her territory to no less than seventeen times its former extent: by artful policy, and overawing armies, she has more and more consolidated her poli-

tical power, and the influence of her despotic sway.

The rapidly progressive augmentation of Russian territory by seizure and conquest—the incredible increase of her population—the introduction of foreign colonies—the astonishing advance of her people in the arts and sciences, in philosophy and literature, general knowledge and civilization—the deeds of her arms, and her present enormous army of nearly half a million of men, one fourth of whom, at least, are chosen troops in a high state of discipline—the extraordinary, and I may add, unnatural and preponderating political influence, she has acquired in European courts—her rapid march in the improvement of her arm-manufactories, cannon-foundries, arsenals, and other appendages of warfare—the institution of various kinds of schools, civil and military, for the instruction of youth—the establishment of Bible societies even in the remotest regions—the self-conceit and haughty spirit of her nobles—the excessive

desire of aggrandizement characteristic of her sovereigns and her generals, her clergy and her slaves—her intriguing and perfidious policy in every court in which she has a representative or *employé*—her obdurate perseverance in the overthrow of the liberty of man in some once powerful nations, while she solemnly *professes* the wish to emancipate her own serfs—the corruption of her morals, and the superstition of her religion—are so many topics for meditation, but more especially for the attention of our own government.

It is a disgrace that (comparatively speaking) so young a nation as Russia—a nation so depraved and so bigoted—should ever have obtained, or for a moment preserved, her ascendancy in continental affairs. I wish to point particularly at her *late* ascendancy in both Turkey and Persia, but more especially in the latter kingdom, where, however, we have no longer an envoy who listens to her propositions, values her smiles, or joins in her measures—in

a word, who can be cajoled by flattery and craft, to forget the true interests of his own country.

With the exception of Sir Henry Willock, Sir John M'Niel* (a man of first-rate talent), and Major Hart†, there has not been a soul since the time of Sir Harford Jones

* Late of the Bombay medical service, and at present minister plenipotentiary to the court of Persia, an officer eminently distinguished for his knowledge of the history and geography of Central Asia.

† Since I quitted Persia, I have learned with unfeigned sorrow that poor Hart is no more. I crave pardon of the reader for taking this opportunity to indulge my feelings by a brief record of my lamented friend. The name of Isaac Hart will not be read, even by a common acquaintance, without awakening sentiments of the deepest regret for his loss. With good talents, he combined an invincible perseverance, a masculine understanding, and great energy of mind. These gifts were accompanied by qualities of far greater value—a generosity of spirit, a purity of principle, and a most affectionate temperament of heart, which secured him the respect of every individual (both Persian and European) of his acquaintance. He was on the eve of revisiting his native country, after an absence of twenty-two years, with the view of assisting the king of Persia, by a personal conference with his

and Sir John Malcolm (Morier was only an *attaché* to the embassy) capable of asserting and upholding our authority in Persia. As an instance of our perfect apathy of the growing influence of Russia in that quarter, I can mention that, when I was last at the court of his Royal Highness Abbas Mirza, Prince Dolgorucki, the Russian ambassador extraordinary, was travelling over the whole kingdom with the shah, while *our* envoy was rubbing his hands over a fire at Tabriz, wondering what could be the prince's views and intentions, but taking no means to ascertain them. It must be admitted, however, that our minister was in a delicate state of health; but he had *two* assistants available for any duty.

It is consolatory to know that our interests in that country are now vested in the hands of one who stands pre-eminent for his politi-

own sovereign, when unhappily his health broke down. He died at Tabriz on the eleventh day of June, 1830, and his remains, followed by the whole city, were interred in the Armenian burial ground at that place.

cal knowledge, for his caution in devising, and his vigour in effecting any measure advantageous to his own government. It may be hoped that he will yet be able to discomfit the plans laid by the deep and dark policy of the northern cabinet for the complete subserviency of the Persian court to the wishes of the czar, and the eventual subversion of the whole of that kingdom.

Of late years, we have heard a good deal about the impossibility of invading Russia with success. Lyall has paid infinite attention to the subject, and, in opposition to the views of Rostopchin, Dupin, and others, has most distinctly stated that Russia is accessible, and even her best provinces conquerable, by a cautious method of procedure, and by a much smaller army than Napoleon had when he took possession of Moscow. Count Segur holds the same opinion. In his work, he compares the relative strength of the north and the south, and then remarks :—“ The north, victorious over the south in her defensive war, as she has been, in the middle ages,

in her offensive one, now believes herself invulnerable and irresistible. Comrades, believe it not! Ye might have trampled over that soil, and those spaces, that climate, and that rough and gigantic nature, as ye had conquered its soldiers. But some errors were followed by great calamities. I have related both the one and the other. On that ocean of evils, I have erected a melancholy beacon of gloomy and blood-red light, and if my feeble hand has been insufficient for the painful task, at least I have exhibited the floating wrecks, in order that those who come after us may see the peril and avoid it."

The applause of Europe, since the year 1812, has perfectly inebriated the Russians. The officers, and the soldiers especially, believe themselves the first in existence, and imagine that they can now conquer the globe, and therefore that wherever their hordes are sent, they will march to certain victory. One of their general officers said to me at Moscow, "You certainly have the *cash*, but *we* alone can wield the sword." Such a con-

viction prevailing in an army forms a host of itself, and has led to great deeds. Was it not the long-credited infallibility of Napoleon that fought half his battles, and animated his soldiers with the idea of their own invincibility? Being master of the human mind, that "greatest of captains," spoke in an oracular style. He issued orders to his soldiers as if he had been giving instructions for a general review. His armies never hesitated; they never dreamt of defeat: they fought; they conquered—they fulfilled the commands of their leader. The Russians wish to inspire their soldiers with the same sentiments; and indeed their generals proudly insinuate that they hold the keys both of Europe and Asia. It becomes a duty to inquire whether these opinions are well founded. My own idea is, that we not only can resist the attacks of the apparently colossal power of the north, but even can retaliate her future aggressions, by taking possession of her best provinces, and reducing her to unconditional terms.

In considering the political state, the pro-

bable policy, and the vaunted military prowess of Russia, we ought to recollect, that this empire is composed of the most heterogeneous and discordant materials ; of tribes of all languages and creeds ; and that she is accessible (except in Siberia) both by sea and land. Beyond her own provinces, she is surrounded by powerful empires, most of which, through the agency of Great Britain, could be excited to act against her ; and she is encircled by territories which were once *independent kingdoms*, or were wrested from other states : and are retained by *force*, not by *consent*. Among these states may be reckoned Kazân, Astrachân, Siberia, the Kubân, the Caucasus, Georgia, Armenia, the northern provinces of Persia, the Krimea, the Baltic (especially Finland), and the Turkish provinces. With regard to the ancient kingdoms of Kazân and Astrachân, as well as that of Siberia, they are indissolubly attached to Russia, or at least their separation must be looked upon as distant. The two former are indeed now become completely *Russian*, and the geographical

position of the latter, renders its dependence upon that empire certain.

I can safely assert, from personal knowledge and observation, that mutual and bitter hatred separates Russia and Persia. His Royal Highness Abbas Mirza, the heir apparent to the Persian throne, will not soon forget the feline art with which Count Paskewitch at one time tendered his velvet paw, and at another protruded the lacerating talon. He earnestly watches an opportunity to attack the Russians, and to drive them from the Persian provinces which they obtained, chiefly through British policy, in the year 1812; as also from Georgia, and beyond the Caucasus. At a levée in Tiflis, Count Paskewitch declared, in my hearing, that he only awaited the commands of the emperor, to annihilate the kingdom of Persia, and to render her a province of the Russian empire. This speech, which is of itself sufficient to exasperate the Persians, I made known to Prince Abbas Mirza, in order that he might duly appreciate their *lip-deep* friendship.

The policy of the Georgians is dictated by necessity, because they are surrounded by three great powers, Turkey, Persia, and Russia, with none of which, from the smallness of their number, they are able to cope, and on one or other of which they must be dependant. The moment, therefore, the current turns, whether in favour of the Persians or of the Turks, the Georgians must join with them against the Russians, and assist in their expulsion from the trans-Caucasian regions. The tribes of Mount Caucasus, who are more allied in religion, in language, in customs, and manners, with the Persians, and still more so with the Turks, than with the Russians, whom they heartily detest, would unanimously rise against their present masters, by whom they are incensed to fury, in consequence of the oppressive and cruel measures pursued towards them. They would most joyfully join either Turks, Persians, or Georgians, were their own mountain freedom the promised reward.

The enmity of the Turks to the Russians

is quite proverbial, and dreadful will be their revenge if ever they have the power of inflicting it. Can they forget the late encroachments of the czar? They pant for an opportunity of advancing their frontiers again to the Don and the Krimea, whose inhabitants would readily shake off the yoke of the Russians, and render homage to their old masters. Indeed, I speak advisedly when I say, that there prevails but one sentiment from the Sea of Azof to the Caspian—one of deadly irreconcilable hostility to Russia. None is better aware than herself of the sentiment which unites as brethren every member of the Mussulman world, the chord of sympathy that vibrates through the whole—a feeling she has found it most difficult to cope with, and impossible to destroy. She knows that she may have

“—— scotch'd the snake, not kill'd it;
'Twill close and be itself, whilst her poor malice
Remains in danger of its former tooth.”

Glance at Sweden: is she contented at

Finland being under the sway of Russia, to say nothing of other provinces of which she has long been bereft? Over Sweden *we* must always have immense influence, as she is so vulnerable in many points by sea.

Now, what is the real strength of the Russian army? Admit that its numerical amount is half a million of men, a number which has an overpowering aspect—at a distance; but on a nearer inspection of this army, one half only are trained, and many of this number even scarcely know the duty of soldiers. But allowing that this number of men form a really effective army, still they are scattered over an immense empire—from the frozen ocean to the Araxes, and from the Dwina and the Dnieper to the Eastern Archipelago. There is, by the by, an army in Georgia of seventy thousand men. In so far, therefore, as the Russian army depends upon mere *physical* force, it may be said to be very great if it could be concentrated; but this is *impossible*. Inasmuch as its force depends upon its discipline, it may be

reckoned considerable, because the Emperor “of all the Russias” has taken immense pains to improve himself in military tactics. Again, the character of the Russian soldier is fully established—brave, hardy, obedient, and devoted—qualities of the greatest importance in a military point of view. In regard to its *moral* force it is despicably *small*, as the Russians know absolutely nothing of the *practice*, however much they may speak of the *precepts*, of morality. But then, again, what is lost in moral force, may be said to be gained in “divine” force, or that force which is generated by the soldier’s confidence in the justice of his cause, and the glorious reward which awaits him should he fall; for he is animated by the idea, that if he dies in the service of his country, his soul will gain a blessed immortality.

If ever the European powers combine against Russia, they would of course secure the co-operation of Sweden, Turkey, and Persia. Suppose that France and Austria were roused to form a league against the

autocrat, and that Great Britain joins them, and engages to furnish a sum of money to assist in the payment of the army, while she equips a fleet for an attack in the Baltic, and another to enter the Black Sea. In this case, the coalition would no doubt engage Persia to carry on a harassing warfare on a promise to secure to her a restitution of all her stolen provinces; it would excite the Turks to make war in Moldavia and Wallachia, and to push forward to Bessarabia; Sweden would muster an army, and make a diversion in Finland; the grand army of coalition would then advance towards the south-east, and pass forward in a line nearly parallel with the western boundary of Bessarabia and Kief. Thus the forces of Russia would be divided: so many would be left in Georgia, so many in Finland, and a large army to oppose the Turks. Their chief forces, however, would be employed against the grand army of coalition; and, in proportion as they advanced, Russia would be obliged to draw her forces from Wallachia and

Bessarabia, and thus, by weakening the power of resistance, favour the advance of the Turks. Suppose the Turks have succeeded in dividing the Russians from Bessarabia, and that, assisted by our fleet, they wish to retake the Krimea; the peninsula being secured, the lines of Perekap, which command its entrance by land, would be fortified and guarded, while a sufficient force was also placed at Inbit to prevent a landing in a way similar to what took place by command of General Lascey in the reign of the Empress Anne. Odessa, Nicolaëf, Kherson, and even Taganrog, might be taken, and the Russian fleet destroyed. Thus, in the South, the Black Sea, the Sea of Azof, with the Krimea, and the frontiers of Bessarabia, as well as the Dnieper, Kief, Kharkof, and Odessa, would form the first line of military operations, and the conclusion of the first season of the campaign. A line of defence being thus formed, which would prevent the Russians from turning the flanks either of the Turks or of the grand army, the whole

might go into winter quarters, secure of abundance of provisions. The combined army would be well supplied by the Turkish provinces, the Turks also by their own country, and the Krimea by the Turks through the British fleet. Indeed, the Krimea would form a splendid magazine for military stores, whence supplies could be obtained at the commencement of the second season of the campaign.

After the dissolution of the frozen snows, the grand army, and the Circassians, Turks, and Krimea Tartars, might advance towards Mohilef, Voronitz, Kursk, Orel, Tula, and Moscow; as well as to Ekaterinoslaf, Simbirsk, and Tambof: thus allowing no enemy to get into their rear, but driving all the forces of Russia before them.

Let us now return to the north. If the Swedes have alarmed the Russians, and have demanded the presence of an army to keep them in check, a powerful diversion would thus be produced in favour of the grand invading army. With the opening of

the second campaign, all necessary preparations having been made, a simultaneous attack might be made by sea on Riga, Revel, and St. Petersburg. The British fleet could pass the batteries of Cronstadt with a fair wind, or by the assistance of steamers. That this is practicable, I know from an officer of high rank in her Majesty's navy, whom I accompanied in his examination of the place; and were it of any consequence, the batteries of Cronslot, Cronstadt, and all the rest which were erected in the Gulf of Finland at the time the emperor Paul expected a British squadron off his capital, could be destroyed, and even the island on which Cronstadt stands, be taken.

The south of Russia thus being in possession of her enemies—the British fleet riding in the Black sea—St. Petersburg blockaded, and threatened with a bombardment by steam vessels—commerce at a stand—the ports in the Baltic, Black, White, and Azof Seas all blocked up—the whole empire from north to south, suffering under innumerable privations

—is it not reasonable to presume that Russia would be glad to conclude a treaty of peace on terms very advantageous to her opponents, or that her slavish hordes would fly to Siberia to await future events? If she delayed coming to terms, the southern provinces would yield abundance of food; time would be granted for gaining over the inhabitants by attention to their manners and customs, by humouring their prejudices, by respecting their religious tenets, and by adopting a kind and conciliatory manner of treatment—means which are sometimes infinitely more important than military armaments.

Whatever be the powers which might wish to invade Russia, or whatever the politics which might dictate such a measure, it would be of the utmost consequence to convince the army, not only of the possibility, but of the facility of the invasion. To prevent all misgivings on their part, by a remembrance of the fate of Napoleon's magnificent army, they should be made acquainted with the *causes* of his failure, and be convinced that great

circumspection would be adopted by the officers.

Although I wish that peace may be long maintained between Russia and Great Britain, I really do think it is of some importance that neither Russia, nor any other state, should be imbued with false notions as to the power of the autocrat, and the inaccessibility of his territories.

CHAPTER IX.

Prince Abbas Mirza—His Hall of Audience—His Appearance—Interview with him—Trade with Persia—Plains and Defiles—Walking Dress—Persian Women—Persian Ladies—Temperature at Tabriz—Departure from Tabriz—Mountain Range—Dekhargaum—A Mountain Glen—Tabriz Marble—Ouroomia and Asphaltes—Profound Solitude—Sterile Scene—Jaffer Kuli Khan—Persian Despotism—District of Benaub—Persian Dish—A Bon-Vivant—Italian Wine Merchant—Ploughs—Rafts—Crossing the Jakantoo—The River Jakantoo—Murder of Brown—Persian Mendacity—The Persian Character—Meandaub—Storks.

HIS Royal Highness Abbas Mirza has been formally proclaimed heir apparent to the Crown. This has been acknowledged by the two greatest powers in Europe, but it is a matter of much doubt and uncertainty whether he will outlive his father. The reigning family will never be firmly established upon the throne, because the Kujurs, or royal tribe of Persia, are detested by all classes of people; and a day may arrive

when an attempt will be made to exterminate them altogether.

During my stay at Tabriz, I was presented to Abbas Mirza, by Doctor Cormick. We were ushered into his royal highness's "Dewan Khaneh," or hall of reception and audience, which on entering we found so dark after the bright sun to which our eyes had been exposed on the way, that we could not for some minutes distinguish a single object within. The room was long and narrow, as are all chambers in Persian houses; and the floor was beautifully carpeted and embroidered. Upon a splendidly embossed felt, at one corner of the room, farthest from the entrance, and in the centre of the felt, which, had no cushions, Prince Abbas Mirza was seated. The style of his dress assimilated with that worn by all Persians of the highest order. He had a dark coloured pelisse, lined and skirted with sable. From his waist projected through the sable, the handle of his dagger, mounted with brilliants, and on his right side lay a Damascus sabre, the scabbard

of which was of gold, enamelled and ornamented with the "feerouza*" (turquoise) and other valuable stones.

In appearance Abbas Mirza was about forty-eight years of age. His countenance was handsome, though his features were not well shaped. His long black-dyed beard was truly splendid; it formed so great a contrast with the paleness of his face, that I could scarcely persuade myself paint had not been used. His hands were delicate, and on one finger he wore a splendid diamond, which he often exposed to our view by bringing the hand in contact with his beard. His affability was extreme, his manner highly polished, and his expressions of civility wore that tinge of hyperbole for which the Persians are so remarkable. Sir Robert Kerr Porter's portrait of him conveyed no idea of the expres-

* Feerouza, or pirooza, signifies in the Persian *prosperous*. Orientals consider that this gem possesses a talismanic virtue, and many wealthy Turks have declared to me that they would give a higher price for one than for a diamond. *They* look to the size of the stone—we to its colour.

sion of his countenance; but Doctor Cormick told me he was sadly altered of late years, in consequence of his debauched habits. His conversation turned principally upon the emigration of Englishmen to New South Wales, and of its climate, productions, &c. He was highly amused at our description of the kangaroo, but nothing could persuade him they were fit for *Kabobs*. However, said he, "I would not hesitate in tasting them, provided *you* set me the example, for then I should see by your face if they were good." Whatever I said, Cormick turned into an extravagant compliment to the prince royal, and appealed to me if it was not what I intended to express. Of course I could not dissent. After remaining in the audience room for about half an hour, we bowed, and retired under the escort of the *Kaimakaum*, or prime minister, who accompanied us to the outer court of the palace, where we remounted our horses, and returned home.

During this interview, I was much surprised at having *tea* handed round to us in

place of that universal beverage of the East, coffee. All who can afford it are now in the habit of drinking *tea* throughout the day: it is even usual, in Azerbijaun, for the people to greet their visitors with a cup of tea. The use of this beverage is becoming very general throughout the northern parts of Persia, although as yet it bears a high price. The trade is entirely monopolized by the Russians. If a few British merchants were established at Tabriz, they might carry on a very successful business; especially now that the Black Sea has been opened to all European vessels, and the old channel of communication with Persia resumed. Merchandize may now at a very trifling expense be conveyed from London to Trebizond, and thence to Persia, in the course of a few weeks. During the last year of my residence in this country no less than five thousand bales of English goods passed through Erzeroum on their passage to Tabriz, and all on account of *native* merchants.

Not long ago, the governor of Bombay,

Major-General Sir John Malcolm, sent Abbas Mirza a very handsome Long Acre built stanhope, which he sported about the suburbs of the city, and issued a proclamation ordering all his ministers to provide themselves with similar equipages *forthwith*, quite forgetting there were neither carriage builders nor harness makers in the empire.

The nature of the country is decidedly favorable for wheel carriages, you might drive Hansom's patent safety cab, or Laurie's pilentum, with nearly as great facility as upon a turnpike road. Little trouble and expense would make good roads, except through the narrow defiles leading from one plain to another, where the ruggedness of the mountain passes presents serious difficulties. It was a pity that his royal highness, on a late hunting *pic-nic*, did not follow the prudent example of Darius, who after the battle of Issus kept to his car, so long as he was on the plains, but alighted from it, and took horse, when he reached the mountains. The prince royal took his stanhope into Karabaugh,

which is his "hunting place," and most foolishly attempted to dash through a defile, when his horse shyed, overturned and smashed the fine stanhope to pieces, and nearly broke his highness's neck to boot. Since this accident, he has forgotten to have his orders enforced either in building stanhopes or constructing roads. Some of the *attachés* to our embassy have produced *droskies* from Tiflis, which are drawn through the narrow streets of the town by their grooms, but on reaching the outer gates they are able to drive a pair over the surrounding plain.

I was often much amused in my rambles round Tabriz, at meeting the Mahometan ladies promenading the streets enveloped in their white muslin *chaders*. This covering resembles a winding sheet, and of course conceals the whole figure, reaching from head to foot. The veil hides the entire face except the eyes, before which there is a sort of netting, fastened to a band tied round the head. The whole attire is ex-

tremely inconvenient as a walking dress, and considered as such by the *Mussulwomen*, especially by those who are pretty. When no native was within hail (as the sailors would say) they invariably (if good-looking) tossed off their veils, and in a sprightly manner expressed a desire to become better acquainted. The same forward air was also displayed by the women, who, although under lock and key, often appeared at the little latticed windows overlooking the road; these manifested by their *coquetterie*, and a peculiar laugh of the eye, their expression of delight at the attention they excited. Their eyelids were blackened with the *kahel*, which is a collyrium composed of the smoke-black produced by burning the shells of almonds; and, in some cases, among the wealthier orders, by pounding down and calcining jewels. Their faces, also, appeared as if they had used *rouge*, and their gaily adorned head-dresses reminded me of the same custom having existed in the earliest times: for in the second book of

Kings, we read of Jezebel *painting* her face, and looking out at the window*. They have also a busy trifling with their veils†, under the pretence of adjusting their châders, or their ringlets, which have *perhaps* been tickling their pretty faces. During the time they are thus engaged, they take especial care to make the best use of their large gazelle-like eyes.

Their musky locks have each a spell,
Each hair itself ensnares the heart;
Their moles are irresistible,
And rapture to the soul impart.

Hafiz, in one of his beautiful odes, exclaims, "I would give for the mole on her cheek the cities of Samarkand and Bokhara."

In speaking of the women, I shall briefly remark that they have intrigue to their fingers' ends, *à la Française*. The women of

* "And when Jehu was come to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it; and she painted her face, and tired her head, and looked out at the window." (2 Kings xi. 30; Ezekiel xxiii. 40.)

† The use of the veil is of the remotest antiquity. Vide Genesis xxiv. 65; also Isaiah iii. 23.

the higher orders are extremely profligate, and when engaged in an assignation, quit their home, wrapt in the impenetrable *châder* of one of their female slaves. They frequently run great risks, and many a paramour has lost his life on account of these women.

I am not inclined to believe that the Mahometan women are so often punished with death, when found guilty of infidelity, as most travellers would make us suppose: indeed I know some instances where the wife of a Moslem has escaped, and the lover been made away with. In Tabriz, a person carried on an intimacy with a Persian lady for several months. When the husband discovered it, he divorced his wife, and secreting himself in the bathing room of the lover's house, a little before daylight, awaited his approach, when he stabbed him to the heart. Another instance of a somewhat similar nature happened at the same place, in which a Christian was the paramour. The injured husband gained access to a curtained recess near the harem, which, he imagined, would

be the place of assignation, and after remaining there for several hours, heard footsteps approaching. On feeling the curtain pulled open from without, he rushed forward, and murdered—*not* the guilty man, but an unfortunate old woman of three score years and ten!

There is no country on earth where the women have greater opportunities for immoral conduct than Persia. Major Hart assured me that when the Russians were in possession of Tabriz, many of the nobles fled to Khoi, Aroomia, and other adjacent towns, leaving their wives and slaves in possession of their houses and of their liberty. These women actually flocked at nightfall to the citadel where many of the Russian officers were quartered, and in such numbers, that the sentries were compelled to repel them with the butt-end of their firelocks, or they would have been completely overpowered. On admission to the officers, it was at first supposed that fear had driven them there for protection; but it soon appeared

that other motives induced their flight. I could add many other facts, but the foregoing will, I think, be sufficient to shew that the Persians have some cause for secluding their women. Indeed, the feelings which they entertain towards the sex is admirably expressed in one of their own words, which we should translate into "frailty," or "weakness." Shakspeare's celebrated words in Hamlet,

"Frailty, thy name is woman,"

is highly characteristic of the Persian ladies.

During the time we stayed at Tabriz the weather was exceedingly cold, with strong south-easterly winds, and occasional falls of snow. The mean of Fahrenheit's thermometer was 22° in the morning, and 25° in the evening; the extremes 4° in the morning, and 9° at night.

After a five weeks sojourn in Tabriz, we engaged with a Katurjee Bashee* to supply us with eight mules for our luggage and Kaja-

* Katurjee Bashee: chief of a caravan of mules.

vahs, purchased three horses for our own riding, and bade adieu to our hospitable friends on the 31st of March, at the hour when the once worshipped god of the Persians was lifting his glorious forehead over the heights of the city walls, and when from every mosque the Mussulman's loud voice was heard calling on all true believers to rise to their orisons—"God is most great; there is no God but God; Mahomet is his prophet! Come to prayer; prayer is better than sleep; come to the asylum of salvation. God is most great; there is no deity but God."

Our Persian Mehmaundar, Seyyud Abdallah, who was ordered to attend us by his Royal Highness Prince Abbas Mirza, advised that our first stage should be made to the village of Khosrou-Shah, seated in the fertile and pretty valley of Uz-koh, about eighteen miles from Tabriz. The road led past the hamlet of Serdary, which rises from an eminence, and occupies the base of a hill, over whose summit the *débris* of a fortress are strewed. A most extensive plain

bounded the view on our right, over which a tantalizing *mirage* played, and excited our imaginations to such a degree, that we fancied ourselves traversing the shores of a Pacific Ocean, on which vessels lay becalmed*. This optical deception has been noticed from the remotest times, and modern writers have described it *usque ad nauseam*.

In winding round the hills on our left, we observed innumerable hamlets embosomed amongst trees, and the snow-capped mountain-range of the Sahand rose beyond the valley to the height of ten thousand feet above the level of the sea, producing a most picturesque effect. The general appearance of this district, the extent of its cultivation, its gardens and its plantations, attest that the great mass of the peasantry in Persia are not so much oppressed as all travellers have asserted. Indeed,

* Quintus Curtius, in describing Alexander's march through the Sogdian desert, says, that "the plains wore the appearance of a vast and deep sea." (Quin. Cur. lib. vii. cap. 5.) This is a most perfect description of the *mirage* as seen in all eastern countries.

the whole of the country on this side the Araxes has exhibited a very strong contrast to that on the other, which alone proves that the Persian chiefs are greatly interested in the produce of the soil. In fact, if a peasant loses his crop here, the landholder assists him; but should such a misfortune occur in Karabaugh, he would be irretrievably ruined, because a beggarly Russian commandant has neither the means nor the inclination to afford him the slightest relief.

From Uz-koh to Dekhargaum, a distance of full twenty miles, the country was a level plain, over which we saw flocks of the bustard, and several large foxes; but owing to their extreme shyness, we could not approach sufficiently near to obtain a shot at them. Shortly before we caught the first view of the town, we observed Lake Ouroomia spreading its unruffled waters through a succession of rugged promontories, of which a towering snow-peaked range, which fringed the western horizon, formed the most magnificent feature. Dekhargaum is encircled by a mud

wall, and surrounded with extensive gardens and orchards. This town was the headquarters of the Russian cavalry at the time Field-Marshal Count Paskewitch was carousing at Tabriz. The whole district is wonderfully productive, and a beautiful foraging country. It once supported the king of Persia's army, which consisted of eighty thousand men, for a period of three months ; and when Paskewitch evacuated Azerbijaun, grain was even cheaper than it had been known for several years.

On the 2nd of April, we passed on to Khaneah over a tract of mountain glen of about sixteen miles, destitute of both habitation and culture. Several rills oozed from out the rocks, and pursued their tranquil courses towards the lake ; and many pretty little birds darted across our road, and appeared to eye us from a distance, as they balanced themselves on the point of the long tufted reeds. We distinctly heard the hawk's cry as he skimmed along the rugged cliffs ; and the yellow-winged earth-bee

boomed around us, and with a bold hum spun away to the marshy shore of Shahi.

The hamlet of Khaneah lies upon the margin of the lake, and were it a little more elevated, would command a grand view of it. The face of the Koordistaun mountains, which gird its western shore, wore all the appearance of a volcanic region. A little before we entered the hamlet, we saw several chalybeate springs bubbling from the earth, and near these were some very curious petrifications. The springs form about a dozen ponds, which stagnate, and petrify by a slow and regular process, and produce that stone which in Persia is called "Tabriz marble." The water had the appearance of being frozen, and we were told that when the stagnation is completed, a man could walk over it. The stone is as transparent as the finest porcelain—very brittle, and often streaked in veins of various colours. Its usual appearance is that of alabaster, and it is capable of receiving as fine a polish. There were no fissures in the slabs that we saw. Rushes

grew around most luxuriantly, and the neighbourhood was marshy and saline. This very remarkable curiosity bears north 20° west, and is situated about two miles from the salt water lake of Ouroomia.

Few objects are more calculated to arrest the attention of the traveller than this lake, which is considered to be the Spauto and Marcianus of Strabo and Ptolemy, and is called Deriah Sháhé, the Sea of Shahi, or Lake of Ouroomia, from a town situated near its western bank. There is a remarkable resemblance between the lakes Ouroomia and Asphaltes. Although fourteen rivers flow into the former, there is no apparent increase in its height; on the contrary, signs of diminution are very apparent, so that the evaporation is greater than the supply. No living creature is found in either lake; for as soon as the rivers carry down any of their fish, they instantly die and become putrid. Their waters are much the same—intensely cold, and containing one third more salt than the ocean. The extreme length of the two lakes

is also the same — seventy miles; but Ouroumia is thrice the breadth of Asphaltes, being thirty miles, and containing about eight fathoms water in its deepest part. It includes eight or ten well wooded islands, and as many rocks rising out of the water, to the height of at least forty feet. These islands supply Tabriz and other large cities with fuel, which in Persia is both scarce and dear.

Just as the sun was on the eve of setting, I proceeded on foot and alone to the shore of the lake, over ground which appeared to have been recently abandoned by the water, if we may judge from the swampy and saline nature of the soil. The western shore appeared high and bold, the northern low and marshy, and terminating with a large ribbon of sand on a level with the lake itself. An awful silence hung around; the sound of its waters slowly rippling before the wind, were even more appalling than the desolation of its shores. In this solitude I felt something approaching to pleasure from the sight of a hawk which passed over its unnavigated

waters. The simple incident arrested the course of those feelings which Divine indignation forces upon a traveller who visits the Dead Sea—though the assertion that no birds can fly over that sea, on account of the pestiferous vapour they inhale from its surface, has received a marked contradiction by our latest travellers. I have already remarked that no fish exist in Lake Ouroomia. I made particular inquiries at the hamlet on this subject, and the villagers assured me they had never seen any, nor could I find on the shore a single shell, or even a solitary tree or weed. On the whole, the vast wilderness, and dreadful sterility of the scene, was amply sufficient to impress me with feelings of awe and dread. I remained about half an hour on the shore, and filled a bottle with the water, which the muleteers accidentally broke. The shades of evening closed over me on returning to the village, which I was not long in reaching, as a rencontre with any of the wandering tribes, who are ever on the watch, would have been rather *inconvenient*.

Previously to leaving the flat waste which surrounds the lake, we gazed upon the marshes which render Sháhé a peninsula. Far off to the west, we saw the cloud-dia-dem that crowns the chain of mountains which divided the old Assyrian and Median empires, and other mountain ranges, all accustomed to "parley with the setting sun." Shortly afterwards we were hidden from the lake altogether, but obtained a more expanded view as we descended from the mountains towards Ajub-shir. From this place we saw all the islands of the gleaming lake lying in a cluster, which gave it the appearance of a little glimmering archipelago. Ajub-shir is a small village, standing beside one of the fourteen rivers that flow into Ouroomia; it is the property of Jaffer Kuli Khan, the opulent chief of Maraughá. This man is one of the greatest landed proprietors in Persia, and the bitterest scourge of Azerbijaun. The peasantry however, appeared industrious, and all of them infinitely superior in intelligence to the Ryots of British India. Jaffer Kuli Khan

lives like an independent prince. His rule is absolute; he is invested with the power of life and death, which he frequently exercises without any reference to His Royal Highness Abbas Mirza. If any complaint of oppression is made at the court of Tabriz, the heir apparent levies a certain sum upon the oppressor, and then consigns the oppressed to his vengeance! It is utterly impossible for Englishmen who have never visited Asiatic countries, to conceive the life of misery which the poorer classes endure under the wild caprice, and perpetual irritation of Persian despots in general, and of this tyrant in particular. The peasant's dearest ties are subjected to brutal passion; and he is under a constant fear that the fruits of a life of industry will be sacrificed to the avarice of some insolent slave raised into sudden authority by his superior villany, and sent forth to live by plunder and rapine. God forbid that the day of oppression may not have an end—that man, however defiled with the dust of slavery, may not wring the scourge

from the hand of the tyrant, and clear away the stain!

We passed the greater part of the day at Ajubshir, as all the beauty tended towards the west; each hour deepening the prospect into mellower splendour. To keep the eye from reposing on the lake, was quite impossible; its glassy waters soothed one's soul, without holding it away from the mounts and cliffs, which, forming of themselves a most perfect picture, were all united with the mountainous regions of western Koordistau n.

Towards sunset we proceeded and met the Persian shepherds driving their numerous flocks and herds to the village. The husbandmen, also, were returning to their homes from the toils of the day. We soon descried the rich town and fertile district of Benaub, which is distinguished by its extensive gardens and orchards. From this spot is seen, not only the great expanse of the lake but the full extremity of the plain to the northward. The hamlets here were large, and "navelled" in lovely groves of fruit-

trees. Their inhabitants, though poor, appeared to possess an abundance of the necessities of life, and were far better lodged and apparelled than the lower orders of Southern Russia and Georgia.

We passed the night within the cottage of a tobacconist, and refreshed ourselves by smoking a choice collection of kaleoons and chibouques. We were then served with two boiled fowls, floating on a small ocean of the milk of goats, and thickened with the whitest rice.

“Here’s a dish fit for the cousin of the sun,” exclaimed our host, rubbing his hands and smacking his lips with expectation.

“Bismillah*,” he added, as a signal for us to commence operations. In a moment his fingers were in the dish, and in another the tenderly boiled fowls were dissected limb by limb.

“By the mouth of Mahommed, this dish is a savoury meal!” To this we all agreed,

* This word signifies, “In the name of the most merciful God.”

for the pilau was excellent; and, to do the Persians justice, it must be admitted, that they excel in this dish; in truth, Persia is the only country where it is cooked to perfection.

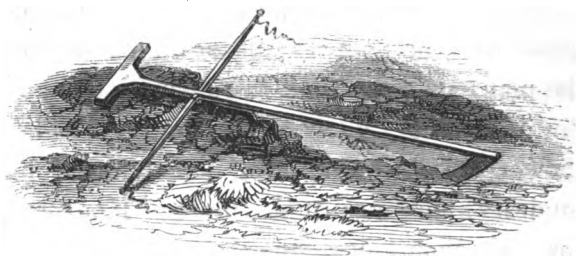
Whilst we were discussing the fowls, I saw several young girls looking and giggling at us through the crevices of the harem door; and, if I might judge from a few hasty glimpses, I should say, that our host had a good taste in women. In presenting me with a kaleoon, I was surprised to see him produce a bottle of Tabriz wine from a curtained recess, which appeared well filled with jars. After a copious libation, he got quite fuddled; so I knocked the ashes from off the top of his chibouque, which he continued to inhale with as much apparent satisfaction as if I had supplied it afresh. He then stretched himself out on the carpet, and fell sound asleep.

Benaub is encircled by vineyards to a considerable extent, which yield a grape celebrated throughout Persia for the good wine

it produces. Indeed, the wine made by an Italian at Tabriz, who was by trade a carpenter, equalled in richness of flavour any I ever tasted at the first tables in London. The king of Persia, by a royal ordonnance, invested this Italian with the order of the Lion and Sun; in return, perhaps, for the good wine he sent to the royal cellar: or, he may have been the Shah's wine-merchant, for any thing I know to the contrary. This, however, is well known, namely, that his majesty's harem consumed more of Hodgson's pale ale than any regimental mess in India.

No one was stirring, although it was early day when we departed for Meandaub, distant about twenty-five miles, over a flat and wearisome country. We passed many hamlets, which terminated on every side in extensive patches of green dale, enriched with vineyards, and dotted with frequent flocks. As we journeyed on, we saw the cultivators on the ground: their agricultural implements appeared of the simplest construction. The plough, for instance, was formed of two

wooden beams, one of which was placed athwart-wise, to yoke the buffaloes or oxen together; and, at the extreme end, a shapeless wedge of iron was affixed, to turn up the earth, thus:—



This ploughshare does not enter the ground deeper than about six or eight inches.

About noon we reached the banks of the river Jakantoo, and found a rude kind of raft, constructed of beams placed across several inflated sheep-skins, which was to convey us to the opposite shore. This raft closely resembled the *kellek* of Assyria, a description of which is given in my work on Chaldæa, published in 1829. The stream appeared about ninety

feet wide: its waters were very rapid, and we had great difficulty in getting the baggage mules on board the raft. On consigning ourselves to the stream, the boatmen rowed with sufficient ease, until they got into mid-channel, when we were swept along by the stream for a considerable distance, and with the greatest velocity. During our passage the boatmen shouted out, "God preserve us!" and one of the most active brought us dexterously to a shoal near the southern bank, when he leaped into the river, and contrived to stay our course so as to admit of our casting the horses and mules adrift, which lightened the boat and enabled us to land on the opposite bank. They then re-crossed the stream, after towing the raft to a certain height up the river, and far beyond the point of embarkation on the opposite shore. Two miles below this ferry, the stream is generally fordable, as the waters have become shallow by expansion; and I was told that, in the depth of winter it freezes so hard as to admit large kafilahs

to cross its surface, though, from the apparent rapidity of its course, I should be inclined to doubt this information.

The Jakantoo flows into the lake of Ooroomea, and is a branch of the Kizil-Oozan, which is supposed by the illustrious Rennell to have been the *Gozan* of Scripture. "In the ninth year of Hoshea the king of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel away into Assyria, and placed them in Halah and in Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes. (See 2 Kings xvii. 6.) Its present appellative is descriptive of the yellow hue of its waters. Its course is tortuous and rapid; during autumn it is very shallow, but from April until August, the dissolution of the snows renders it impassable except by ferries. Its waters are filled with snakes, which the natives, however, declare are not venomous. Being augmented by several streams from the neighbourhood of the small hamlet of Bannah, seated in the north-eastern branch of the Koordistaun mountains, it sweeps along through an Alpine country, till

it enters Ghilan; where, rushing onwards through a beautifully wooded region, it discharges itself into the Caspian Sea, a little to the eastward of Resht.

The banks of this river became, a few years ago, the scene of the mysterious murder of the celebrated African traveller, Brown; and, although his Britannic Majesty's ambassador extraordinary, Sir Gore Ouseley, was in the country, and, in fact, very close to the neighbourhood of this sad catastrophe at the time it occurred, yet, strange to say, no resolute and determined measures were taken for the apprehension of the perpetrators. I have little doubt that his majesty of Persia was accessory to this murder: indeed, it was the current opinion in the country at the time; but, unfortunately, our character was not then in very high estimation at the court of the "king of kings." Poor Brown's ultimate object was to investigate that magnificent country, Khorasaun. The present shah appears determined that no traveller shall have his majesty's *real*

protection, if his journey lies in that direction. Although Mr. Fraser visited some parts of it, which he has ably described, yet his sufferings were great, his obstacles almost insurmountable, and his treatment infamous. For this our travellers have to thank their kind friend and protector, Fattah-Ali-Shah. His majesty dislikes to hear of any British travellers penetrating into Khorasaun; he, therefore, seldom fails to use his best endeavours to make them adorn a tale, instead of telling one.

His majesty is the most accomplished liar in the kingdom: for, be it known that, in Persia, "lying and slandering" are considered fashionable accomplishments. Whoever doubts the authenticity of this assertion, had better close my pages and consult those travellers of the last as well as of the present century; he can then judge for himself. For gain, a Persian will commit the blackest crime—falsehood flows spontaneously from his lips, even when no apparent motive exists. In speaking of the

Persian character, it will be found to be the natural result of the circumstances in which the people are placed. A Persian will defend himself by cunning rather than by courage, and is so dependant on the aid of others, that he knows not when to trust to himself. He calls on "Khudah" when he should exert himself, and sheds tears when he should shew spirit. He makes splendid professions when he knows his sincerity will not be tested; and is at once mean and ostentatious. In a word, his character is made up of selfishness, avarice, treachery, deceit, and cruelty. Lord Heytesbury asked me, at St. Petersburg, what was the *real* character of the Persians? I replied, "My lord, they surround a person, like the flies, with the sunshine, to disappear when he gets under a cloud. Their buzzing is quite nauseous. God help the man who does not know how to appreciate the value of their *lip-deep* friendship!"

After arranging our baggage, reloading our mules, and paying the boatmen a

tomaun, which is equivalent to twelve shillings and fourpence, we directed our course due south, which soon brought us to the gates of the town of Meandaub, or Meadow. On entering this place, we had to pass through such narrow lanes, that our laden cattle found the greatest difficulty in effecting a passage at all. Our baggage was frequently thrown down by the mules coming forcibly in contact with the dilapidated mud walls, between which we wound. On these occasions, our servant, Meerza Hoossain, used to apply the "chabook" (whip) to the poor katurjees backs most unmercifully, and made up for the utter indifference displayed by our mehmaundar Seyyud Abdallah, who was the most useless and cowardly scoundrel I ever met, being utterly indifferent either to our comfort, or our safety.

Although night was fast approaching, no lights were seen in any quarter except in the miserable bazaar, which was, in fact, the only thoroughfare that deserved the name of a street. We took possession of a large

house, the property of the wealthy and powerful Persian, Jaffer Kuli Khan, of Maraughah. Its lofty walls formed an oblong square, or parallelogram, and exteriorly it was highly ornamented in the arabesque manner. Its rooms were capacious and convenient; its interior walls stuccoed and painted; and, what is very uncommon in Persia, its height was nearly one hundred feet. This edifice was fast falling to decay, and, upon its summit, great numbers of storks had built their circular nests of sticks and reed. These make a loud clattering noise with their long bills, which sounds exactly like a watchman's rattle. Although these birds are considered unclean, and forbidden to the Jews—"these are they which ye shall have in abomination among the fowls; they shall not be eaten, they are an abomination: the stork and heron after her kind," (Leviticus xi. 13, 19)—yet they are marked by qualities of an amiable nature, and so attached to the tops of houses, that they appear to defy all

attempts at dislodging them. Indeed, the Persians say that they bring good luck to the dwelling on which they alight, and, in Egypt, they are held as objects of veneration. Bruce remarks, in his "Travels," that it was a great breach of order to kill any of these birds in Cairo; and Ali Bey mentions a most extraordinary establishment at Fez, for the treatment of lunatics. "It is very strange," says he, "that great part of the funds have been bequeathed, by the wills of various charitable testators, for the express purpose of nursing sick cranes and storks, and burying them when dead*." I never heard an instance of any one daring to shoot them. During the winter season, they migrate to the level country bordering the great rivers of Mesopotamia, and return again to their old habitations in early spring—"yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times." (Jeremiah viii. 7).

* See the Travels of Ali Bey.

CHAPTER X.

Meandaub — Saladin — Mountain-range — Mineral Treasures—
 Mines—Forests—Underwoods—The Camel's Thorn—Niebuhr's
 Remarks—Population of Koordistaun—The Koords—Murder
 of Schultz—Koordish Ferocity—The Koordish Frontier.

THE Persian town of Meandow, or Meandaub, is situated on the frontiers of one of the most beautiful and celebrated regions in the east — Koordistaun, the ancient Karducia*, which, in olden times, was rendered so renowned by the pen and the sword of Xenophon; and, in more modern days, has

* Καρδούχους. This people came afterwards to be better known under the name of Parthians. Strabo says, *Πρὸς τῇ Τίγρει, τὰ τῶν Παρθυίων χωρία οὗς οἱ παλαιοὶ Καρδούχους ἔλεγον.* It was the posterity of this very people who, under the conduct of their king Arsaces, freed their country from the dominion of the Seleucides, and afterwards became a terror even to the Romans, who were so to the rest of mankind.

possessed the greatest historical interest from being the country of Saladin (Salah-ul-deen, "the righteousness of religion,") whose achievements with our own gallant Richard Cœur de Lion are fresh in the remembrance of every reader of the wars in Palestine. A Koordish writer states, that Saladin obtained great wealth on the death of his relative Azad Ishmail. Amongst other jewels, was a staff of emeralds; and his desire of attaining wisdom was gratified by his succeeding to a library of a hundred thousand volumes. This writer coincides with D'Herbelot, except in the account which the latter gives of the contracted marriage between the brother of Salah-ul-deen and the sister of the king of England.

According to an Oriental manuscript, Saladin was the son of the police magistrate of the town of Tekhrit. "*Incidit nativitas ejus, prout memoriæ proditum accepimus a fide dignissimis, qui in eam indagarunt secundam artem astrologicam; ad thema natalitium ei inædificandum, aliquo mensium*

anni quingentesimi trigesimi secundi; in arce *Tecrita*, cujus præfecturam obtinebat pater ejus *Jobus Ibn Schjads*i, vir nobilis, magnanimus, prudens, indole ac moribus pulcherrimis præditus, qui natus fuerat Dawini*." Herbelot de Moloinville in his *Oriental Dictionary*, calls him "Salaheddin Iosef Ben Aioub Schadi," and says, "C'est le nom du grand Saladin, qui étoit Curde d'origine, et qui vint, avec son frère Schirgoueh, au service de Noureddin Zenghi, Prince d'Helep, de Damas, et de plusieurs autres pays et villes de la Syrie et de la Mesopotamie, Prince, que les Historiens des Guerres que les Francs ont faites dans la Terre-Sainte, appellent Norandin†."

Koordistaun presents an immense succession of hill and valley, dells and plains of exhaustless fertility, and mountains towering to nearly the height of Mont Blanc. The top of the great range of

* Vita et Res gestæ Sultani Almalichi Alnasiri Saladini. Lugduni Batavorum, edit. 1732.

† D'Herbelot *Bibliothèque Orientale*, p. 742, 4to.

Zagros rises upwards of fourteen thousand feet above the level of the ocean. Between the Araxes and the base of this range, high masses of mountain support table land of greater or lesser breadth, which sometimes widens into broad plains. Where these plains do not occur, the mountains attain their greatest elevation. The Euphrates and Tigris sweep round, and run nearly parallel to these ranges. The great Karducian chain is cut through by the Tigris, near to the site of the ancient Nineveh, whence both streams enclose the boundless plains of Mesopotamia, or Ull Jezirah*, as

* Gezirah, isle, et presqu'isle en général, mais, en particulier, Al Gezirah se prend pour la Mesopotamie, province renfermée entre les deux fleuves de Tigre et l'Euphrate, que les Arabes divisent en quatre parties, auxquelles ils donnent le nom de Diar, ou Quartiers. (D'Herbelot, fol. Paris ed. p. 384.)

The tract of country called Jezirah is that which lies between the rivers Dejleh (Tigris) and Forat (Euphrates). On the eastern side of the river Dejleh, and on the western side of the Forat, are various towns and cities, which are reckoned, on account of their vicinity, as belonging to Jezirah, although in fact, not so. (Vide

the Arabs of the country call it, and uniting at Koorna*, or Apamea, fall into the Persian Gulf.

The lofty chains which thus traverse and enclose the country of the Karducii, contain many productions of the mineral kingdom. Their treasures still lie buried and unexplored, because this territory is in the hands of barbarians who are utterly ignorant of the hidden wealth with which nature has endowed it. Many hills contain inexhaustible mines of salt, especially between Van and Ararat. A small lake also exists here, which, during the autumn, is covered with a thick crust of salt. Saltpetre, sulphur, and arsenic, are likewise to be met with, and the soil is deeply impregnated with alum.

the Oriental Geography of Ebn Haukal, an Arabian traveller of the tenth century. 4to. p. 69.)

* Seleucus Nicator founded this town in honour of his first wife Apama, the daughter of Artabazus the Persian. He was a great protector of the Jews, and settled many of them in this and other towns upon the Euphrates. (Vide Prideaux *passim*, and the Universal History, *Ancient*, Vol. ix., p. 179, edit. 1747.)

Near the sources and banks of the rivers and their tributary streams, are mines of auriferous and argentiferous copper, and the rocks in the vicinity of these mines contain veins of the most beautiful and variegated marble and alabaster. The chains are composed of limestone to the north, and granite to the south. Volcanic rocks occur near Aroomia, and there also mineral springs are very frequent. The inferior ranges contain gypsum, coal, iron, and a stratum of white calcareous stone: pumice and whetstones are also met with. On Mount Zagros occurs a stone of extreme brittleness, filled throughout with a blue stratum which resembles the firouzah*, or turquoise. Argillaceous

* The natives say that the name *firouzah* was given to this stone by Firouz-shah. Ansar, near Nishapour, in Khorasaun, is the best turquoise mine in the world. These stones vary greatly in colour; but all, except the azure, are considered of little value. A Persian assured me, that the turquoise of Nishapour changed its colour to green or white if kept in a box of musk, or if exposed to any great heat.

earths likewise occur, of various qualities and colours.

The mountains are clothed with forests to an elevation of about six thousand feet: above that height, the country is less covered; though, in some of the recesses, forests exist even in more elevated spots, and, where they reign triumphant, traces of habitations are "few and far between." The trees are the walnut (here a gigantic tree), beech, pine, oak (rather stunted), cedar, plane, mulberry (both white and red), cherry, apple, pear, medlar, and apricot. From the kernel of the fruit of the last tree an excellent oil is extracted, which the Koords use for culinary

Pliny remarks of the Kallais (turquoise), "*Quæ sunt earum pulchriores, oles, unguento et mero colorem dependunt.*" I have already remarked, that all Orientals have a great passion for this lovely stone, and value it higher than they do a diamond, as they say that it imparts a lustre to the eyes, and cures the ophthalmia. I procured a very large and perfect one from a native friend at Baghdad, who gave the above as a reason for not wishing to part with it.

and other domestic purposes. The bushes consist of the juniper, wild plum, wild rose, saw-wert, wild madder, and vine. The liquorice root is burnt as fire-wood; the plant grows abundantly in stony and barren spots, and, on its thickest branches, lumps of gum form as large as a snake's egg. It attains the height of fifteen inches above the soil, in bushy tufts, and is covered with both smooth and scabrous pericarps. The botanical name is *Glycyrrhiza echinata*. The Koords call it *soos*. The wild vine is seen at times, twisted like a corkscrew around the loftiest trees; at others, intertwined like the strands of a cable, then drooping on the ground, and again taking root, and thus securely anchoring the tree against the fury of the sweeping storm.

.Another plant, eminently deserving of notice, grows in thick round tufts covered with long spines. It covers the lowest tracts of country, sometimes to such an extent as to obstruct a traveller's progress through it.

This lowly shrub affords a most beautiful exemplification of the merciful care of Providence and the fitness of the Creator's designs. It abounds also in Arabia, India, Africa, Tartary, and Persia. In the vast deserts of those countries, it is the only food of the camel, that valuable inhabitant of such unfriendly wastes. These noble animals browse upon it in preference to any other herb. Their mastication of it produces a frothy salivation at the mouth, which appears to impart to them a very pleasurable sensation. Its lasting verdure refreshes the eye of a traveller, and, from the property possessed by its deep-searching, tough, fibrous roots, of collecting the scanty moisture of an arid plain, well known to the Bedouin, it is converted to the essential purposes of aiding in the production of a grateful and healthy nourishment for man. The stem of the plant is, in spring, divided to near the root; a single seed of the water melon is then inserted in the fissure, and the earth replaced about the

thorn. The seed becomes a parasite, and the nutritive matter, which the brittle, succulent roots of the melon are ill-adapted to collect, is abundantly supplied by the deeper searching and tougher fibres of the root of this thorn. An abundance of good water melons is thus periodically forced from saline soils, incapable of other culture. This valuable plant is the *Hedysarum alhagi*. It bears its small oval leaves but a few days in early spring; the beautiful crimson flowers appear later in the same season, and are succeeded by the short moniliform pod peculiar to this genus.

The favourable position of this lovely country, and the heavenly climate it enjoys, are the probable causes of its abounding in products which are rarely found together in any other part of the world. A deep and prolific soil prevails throughout most of the cantons of Zagros.

Niebuhr, who visited a part of Western Koordistaun, thus expresses himself regarding -

it:—"Kurdestan est un pays montagneux et très fertile, surtout en noix de galle, desquelles il en va tous les ans une quantité étonnante à Haleb (Aleppo), et de là plus loin en Europe; en manne, dont on se sert dans cette contrée au lieu du sucre; en coton, ris, tabac, raisins, et figes. On cultive aussi icy du *Krab* (de la garance), *Fua*, *Kas*, une espèce de soie grossière qui doit croître sur les arbres, et du mastic (Alk), mais qui n'est pas si bon que celui de l'Isle de Chio. Comme les habitans de cette contrée montagneuse, quoique assujettis, ont toujours été gouvernés par leurs propres princes, ils ont encore conservé leur propre langage, qui à ce que l'on prétend, a trois dialectes differens:—celui du district 'Kalla Dsjola' tiendrait beaucoup de la langue Persane; celui de 'Koi Sandsjak,' beaucoup de la Chaldéenne et de l'Arabe; et, dans la partie septentrionale du Kurdestan, beaucoup de la Turquie*."

* Voyage en Arabie par C. Niebuhr, tome second, p. 268.

with a Koordish chieftain, by name Mustapha Khan, of whom I shall have occasion to speak presently. They are divided into four tribes, the descendants of those Christians who fled from the persecution of Justinian, who are now established and governed by an hereditary priest, and to this day inhabit the recesses of Mount Jidda-Daug, whose altitude is little less than the Caucasian range.

In computing the population of Koordistaun, and taking into consideration the peculiar habits of the people, we may reckon, that a very great portion of the superficies of this country is uninhabited; indeed, no very correct estimate can be formed of the number of its inhabitants*. The oppression

and thence suggests that the original seats of the Koords may have been the Gordæan mountains, or the Gordœnæi; where, according to the Chaldæan Berosus, and the Armenian Maribas, cited by Moses Chorenensis, Xisuthrus landed after escaping from the deluge. The Koords boast of being the direct descendants of Noah.

* The Arabian traveller, Ebn Haukel, says, the jouns (families) of the Koords are more than can be exactly

and cruelties they have endured ; the vengeance they have inflicted on their Turkish and their Persian neighbours ; and, above all, their retention of independence from the earliest ages up to the present day,—these circumstances combined, invest this country with a peculiar interest. The mountainous regions have at no period been under subjection either to the Turks or to the Persians.

Sir John Malcolm, in his elaborate History of Persia, thus alludes to the Koords:—

“ Though there are several cities in Koordistaun, the military tribes of that country seldom inhabit either towns or considerable villages ; nor do they assemble, except for purposes of war, in large encampments. The dwelling of the native of this province often solitary ; and, whether the Koords reside in houses or tents, it is seldom that more than a few families dwell together.

numbered. Some maintain two hundred persons, such as shepherds, and labourers, and grooms, and boys or servants, and such like. Their number cannot be ascertained.

This custom, whether it arises from the nature of the country, or from adherence to ancient usage, is calculated to retard every progress to improvement. We have, indeed, evidence of the inhabitants of this country continuing in an unchanged state for more than twenty centuries. Neither the rays of civilisation which enlightened Persia under Nourchirwaun, nor those that shone upon the neighbouring provinces of Arabia and Turkey, under the most celebrated of the Caliphs, ever penetrated amid the wilds of Koordistaun, though these were situated in the immediate vicinity of Ctesiphon and Baghdad. The Koord saw and despised a knowledge which was accompanied by an effeminacy and luxury that rendered man more subject to the oppression and cruelty of his rulers. He preferred the savage freedom which he enjoyed amid his rugged mountains, and felt a pride in the privations and hardships to which he was exposed, when he regarded them as associated with his independence. It is not surprising that

religion should never have made any great progress amid such a people. There is no proof of their ever having been zealous followers of the worship of Zoroaster; and though they now profess the faith of Mahommed, they are in general, not only inattentive to the substance, but careless in the observance of the ceremonies it prescribes. Among the ruder tribes of this country, the 'written law' meets with little attention. They continue to be governed by the usages of their forefathers, and yield an obedience to their chief, which he repays by his protection, and by exercising his authority on all occasions, with the utmost regard to their customs and prejudices*."

The learned D'Herbelot thus describes this nation:—"C'est une nation particulière,

* A remarkable instance of this occurred when I first visited Koordistaun. The mehmaundar told me, a man of a certain tribe had the day before murdered his father. "He will, of course, be put to death," I observed. "I do not think he will," said the mehmaundar: "he is himself heir, and there is no one to demand the blood."—"Will not the prince of the

et originaire des Monts Gordiens, qui sont une branche du Mont Taurus, et qui separent l'Arminie de la Haute Medie. Les anciens ont appelé ces montagnes, et les peuples d'alentour, Cordueni et Carduchi; et leur plus haute croupe est appelée aujourd'huy par les Turcs, Parmak Daghi, la montagne du doigt, à cause qu'elle est escarpée de tous côtez. Cette nation s'est repandue dans l'Assyrie le long de l'Euphrate et du Tigre, et a donné à ce pays le nom de Kurdistan, le pays des Curdes. Ils n'ont reçu que fort tard la loy Mahometane, et ont été presque toujours ennemis des Musulmans. Mirkhond rapporte, dans la Vie d'Omar le Khalife, et l'année 23 de l'Hégire, que les Curdes étant venus au secours des Persans, assiégez par les Musulmans dans un

country take care that this parricide does not escape?" — "The waly," he coolly replied, "cannot interfere in a case like this, unless appealed to; and, after all, if the affair be agitated, the murder will be compounded. Among Koords, who are always at war, the life of an active young man is much too valuable to be taken away on account of a dead old one!"

château sur le Tigre, ils envelopperent l'armée du Khalife, et la taillèrent en pièces. La maison des Jobites, de laquelle étoit Saladin, tiroit son origine d'une tribu de ces peuples, nommée Revadiat et Ravandiat. Cette nation établit une Principauté ou Dynastie dans le pays de Lor ou de Lar, de laquelle l'Auteur du Nighiaristan fait mention après celle des Cara Cathaiens. Les Curdes peuplèrent aussi plusieurs bourgades de l'Iraque, Babylonienne ou Chaldée, autour des marais appelez Nabatheens. Curdiah et Curtekiah, qui signifie en Turc, une Cosaque, a pris son origine d'un habillement des Curdes : comme nos Cosaques et nos Hongrelines sont prises des Cosaques et des Hongrois. Quelques auteurs ont cru que les Curdes sont Chaldéens d'origine, et qu'ils ont été nommez autrefois Keldan, comme les peuples de la Chaldée, qui sont appelez plus ordinairement, par les Hébreux et par les Arabes, Caschdânin*."

* D'Herbelot Bibliothèque Orientale, pp. 277, 278.

Xenophon says, "The people inhabiting the Carducian mountains were a warlike nation, and *not* subject to the king: once, the king's army, consisting of one hundred and twenty thousand men, penetrated into their country, from whence not one of them returned, the road being hardly passable. But, whenever there was a peace subsisting between them and the governor residing in the plain, there was an intercourse between the two nations*."

The mountaineers make war, like the

* The Expedition of Cyrus into Persia, by Xenophon. Vol. i. Book iii. page 234. Xenophon entered into the army of Cyrus the younger as a volunteer in his expedition against his brother, Artaxerxes, king of Persia. This enterprise proving unfortunate, Xenophon, after the death of Cyrus, advised his fellow-soldiers to attempt a retreat into their own country. They listened to his advice, and, having had many proofs of wisdom as well as courage, they gave him the command of the army in the room of Prozenas, who had fallen in battle. In this command he acquired great glory by the presence and firmness with which he conducted back the army, through the midst of innumerable dangers, into their own country.

nations of antiquity and the Arabs of the present day, not for any political object, but for the sake of booty, which is the price of their conquests. They are excessively jealous of their independence, and are delighted at the vicinity of their Turkish and Persian neighbours, as they are thus afforded the opportunity of enriching themselves. The horse and the sword had made them masters of the plain; they became feudal possessors of the territory under the tenure of service to the Shah, and held the lowland Koords as cultivators of the soil. But thousands removed to the impregnable fastnesses of the mountains, and, as the Turkish or Persian chain became heavier, they flung it off, and joined their free countrymen. The vacancies produced by such flights have, however, been gradually filled up by large emigrations; and, in whatever quarter these emigrants have settled, they have become active, hardy, and intrepid.

Turkish oppression on the one hand, and Persian despotism on the other, has been the

source of all the chief defects in the Koordish character. Its nature is so elastic, that it springs up in every momentary removal of the pressure. The greatest contrast to the inhabitants of the plains, who are generally cultivators of the soil, and known by the appellation of the "peasant Koords," is to be found in those mountainous retreats where the military Koords alone reside, and where no strangers dare venture to intrude. In such positions the Koords are hardy and brave, passionately fond of their homes and families, and subsisting on little. The picture, however, has its dark side—they are turbulent, envious, and treacherous. But, surely, these great defects would be the natural qualities of any people leading such wandering and distracted lives. In his most inaccessible hold—pent up between frightful passes—excluded from general communication by fathomless ravines—liable to immediate and sudden surprises from a merciless enemy, and, from his cradle to his grave, either the spoil or the

antagonist of the aggressor—afflicted by poverty—living a life of extreme hazard in constant flight or attack—how can it be expected that the Koord should possess the virtues that dignify human nature? There is no national character on earth that would not have darkened under this eternal rudeness of fortune. It is really surprising how the Koord has retained any qualities which entitle him to rank amongst men.

From time immemorial, Koordistaun has been a continued scene of war, turbulence, and robbery. Some of its south-eastern districts have occasionally paid a small tribute to Persia for the privilege of pasturing their flocks and herds in Ardelan free from molestation; but the whole disciplined army of the prince royal of Persia has never been able to reduce to subjection those numerous, fierce, and predatory chieftains of the western frontiers, who assert a perfect independence*. The form of the whole

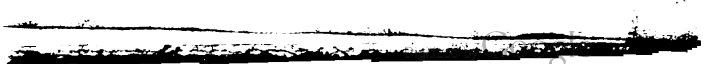
* There are several districts in Koordistaun whose inhabitants *profess* allegiance to the monarch of Persia,

of that part of the country, indeed, is sufficiently favourable to such pretensions, being very mountainous, and intersected by the most frightful ravines, over which it would be extremely difficult to conduct an army, and, in some places, an utter impossibility; for the only communication the Koords have with each other, is by means of the trunks of trees slung over the ravines by ropes which are removed at pleasure. Arrian, in describing the march of Alexander against them, says, "This people are a very warlike nation, and inhabit the hills and mountainous parts of Media; and, therefore, confiding in their own valour and the fastnesses of their country, would never be brought to admit

but who are even *more* independent of all attempts at interference with their internal government than the province of Ardelan, because their mountains are more inaccessible. Among these, one of the most remarkable is a branch of the tribe Hakkarey, who dwell in that lofty ridge of hills which lies immediately west of the Lake of Ooroomia, and approaches the vicinity of the town of Salmas in Azerbijaun. (History of Persia, by Sir John Malcolm.)

of any foreign prince to reign over them, and were never subdued during all the time of the Persian Empire; and at that time they were so very high, that they slighted the valour of the Macedonians*." The valour of the Koords emancipated their country from the foreign rule of the successors of Alexander. For a short time the legions of Rome had occupied a part of Carducia, but they possessed little more than their military positions; and it is remarkable, that none of the numerous Tartar tribes who have overrun Persia have ever permanently fixed themselves in Koordistaun. Plutarch relates, that Artaxerxes marched into the country of the Carducians at the head of three hundred thousand foot, and ten thousand horse, and that his army would in all probability have been destroyed, had not Tiribazus, by infusing into the minds of the two kings of the Car-

* See Book xvii. c. 11, and Plin. Nat. Hist. Book vi. c. 27.



ducians a mutual distrust, induced them to make peace with the Persians*.

The Persian historian, Sherriff-al-Deen, in his history of this nation, asserts, that when an envoy from a chief of Koordistaun came before Mahommed, the prophet was so struck by his fierce looks and gigantic figure, that he prayed to God that so formidable a race should never be united; and hence those divisions which have ever since continued to distract this country.

The Illyauts, or wandering pastors of Koordish and Toorkomaun origin, roam over the more level country with their few sheep and goats, which, with some dates and milk, compose all their wealth. The Persians from Azerbijaun sometimes ravage the north-eastern frontier. The desolation and want of security occasioned by these expeditions can hardly be conceived. In some parts the open country has been swept of its inhabitants, who have been sold as slaves or put to the rack. The consequence is, that several

* Vide Langhorne's Plutarch, *passim*.

smiling hamlets have been reduced to heaps of ashes, and all cultivation devastated. Here the peasant Koord goes out to his ground with his matchlock slung across his back, too happy if, ere the hand of the spoiler has laid waste the produce of his husbandry, he can convey it to his granary in the mountains. Guards and sentinels are every where stationed to give him timely notice, not only of the enemy's approach, but also of the military Koord, from whose ill usage he is never secure, and who enjoys many privileges over the "Royahs," as these poor cultivators are called.

If to these evils, the protracted endurance of which is surely enough to dishearten the bravest people, we add the awful waste of human life, which, by the daily desolation to which these borderers are exposed, makes a mockery of the dearest of human ties, can we wonder that they should abandon themselves to despoliation?

Those tribes which range along the frontiers, differ in their habits, according to

the circumstances in which they are placed. In some parts they are pastoral, hospitable and kind to strangers; in others, they are reserved, and shun all intercourse; in others, again, they are predatory, cruel, and very ferocious. Of these last are the chieftains on the north-western frontiers, and in the neighbourhood of Van*. As a proof of this, I may cite the recent murder of that indefatigable traveller and antiquarian, Schultz, by the barbarian chief Mustapha Khan, of the great Koordish tribe of Hakkarey†. This

* The Lake of Van, or Wân, is about two hundred miles in circuit. Its waters are brackish, and yield a most delicious fish, which is salted and sent to every part of Asia Minor for sale. Several vessels are employed on this lake, and the greatest activity prevails upon its banks—a striking contrast to the deathlike silence that exists on Lake Ooroomia.

† Hakarie, un district du Kordestan, est à l'est de la seigneurie "Amadie," et dans le voisinage du gouvernement Turc, "Wan;" cette petite contrée est fort montagneuse, et est presque tout habitée par des "Nestoriens," qui ont leur propre patriarche, qui s'appelle toujours "Schemaun" (Simeon), et est entièrement indépendante de celui d'El Kosch. On dit que la

event took place near the hamlet of Bash-Kullah, to the westward of lake Ooroomia. Two servants, a Persian soldier, and a serjeant from Prince Abbas Mirza's army, were likewise assassinated. Poor Schultz was one of the Professors of the University of Giessen, sent out to visit Koordistaun for scientific and literary purposes at the sole expense of the king of the French. Our envoy at the Persian court, Sir John Macdonald Kinneir, instantly despatched a confidential person towards Van, to collect, if possible, the unfortunate traveller's papers and effects, and to take steps for punishing the murderers. What success attended the messenger I never heard; but I know that

Pascha de Wan y envoya un Begk, qui reside dans un village "Komerie," mais que les habitans ne se soucient guères de lui, et que, par la crainte d'être soumis entièrement au joug de Mahométans, ils évitent toute liaison avec eux. Les Nestoriens à Häkari ne permettent pas seulement, que des marchands Mahométans viennent chés eux, bien moins permettent-ils, que quelqu'un de cette religion s'établisse chés eux. (Voyage en Arabie par C. Niebuhr, tome ii., Amst. 1780.)

Major Hart fully intended to proceed to the stronghold of Mustapha Khan, with the determination of inflicting retributive vengeance on this perfidious murderer. The loss of Schultz, is as great as any which Oriental literature has ever sustained. It is, indeed, to be hoped that a portion, at least, of his extensive collections has been received by the French government, and that those which were in his possession at the time of his death were also recovered, so that the fruits of his laborious researches may not be lost to the scientific world.

On the borders of Georgia, to the north, we find the Koords attacking the towns and villages, and carrying away the prettiest Georgian and Circassian girls they can lay hold of. On the banks of the Tigris, to the south, they barter their captives to regular traders, who supply the harems of the wealthy residents of Baghdad, Bassorah, and other Turkish cities. Towards the east, they are not so cruelly disposed, though obliged, in self-defence, to assume a ferocious

character; but, nevertheless, they will carry on blood-feuds from father to son, like the Arabians, and also after the manner of the Greeks in the Morea.

Koordistaun is so mountainous and difficult, particularly in winter and early spring, that travellers very seldom pass through it. Large caravans do not even attempt the route, for there are only narrow footpaths leading either through thick forests, or beside dangerous precipices. Kafilahs, invariably pass by Teheraun and Ispahaun, into Fars, or, by Hamadaun and Kermanshaw, towards Adiabene and southern Mesopotamia. The Persians never think (except in their dreams) of entering it unless by compulsion or bribery—a little of both being invariably used. They even go so far as to declare, with the utmost seriousness, that if a poor traveller is ever caught trespassing on the Koordish frontier, he is severely beaten for not having brought sufficient property to make him worth robbing!

CHAPTER XI.

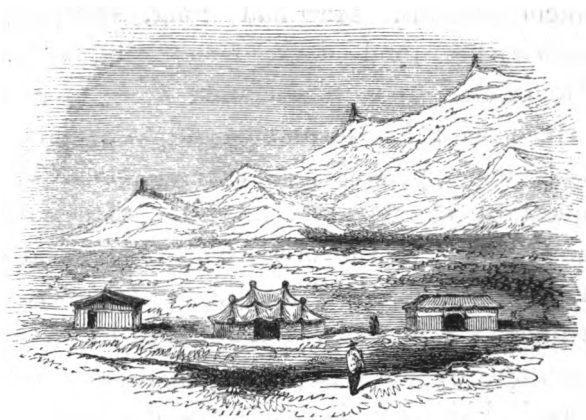
Forebodings—Koordish Villages—Caution to Travellers—The Koords—A Ruse de Guerre—The Koordish Country—Miserable Village—Hospitable Reception—Koordish Women—Koordish Banquet — Miserable Lodging — Mountain Pass — Perilous Road—Retreat of Xenophon—Carducians—Our Muleteer's Alarm—An Affray—Cowardly Mehmaundar—Mahommedan Piety—Fertile District—Picturesque View—Lovely Country—A Frank Avowal—Toorkomaun Encampment—Koordish Burial-Ground—Oriental Sepulture—Reverence for the Dead.

OUR muleteers were very slack in loading their mules, in consequence of having heard at the caravanseraï during the night, that the Koords in this part of the country were a desperate set, caring for neither God nor devil—that they never took off their boots from one year's end to another, much less prostrated themselves in prayer—that, in fact, both ourselves and our cattle would be starved to death by entering the country, as it would be an utter impossibility to hold any communications with them. I had some little difficulty in lulling their ap-

prehensions; but, after giving a *douceur* to the old monkey-faced Katurjee-bashee (who, by the way, was a Hajee), we got him into good cheer, and, quitting the gates of Meandaub as soon as they were opened, directed our course to the southward, over a plain surrounded by calcareous mountains. We then struck into a deep valley, profusely covered with coarse weeds and herbage, through which flowed a stream formed by the melting of the mountain snows. When we got about half way up this valley, we saw several Koordish villages on our right, and some little cultivation which pastured the flocks and herds of the tribe. Their houses were meanly built of mud and chopped straw, and, although above the ground, were very low, having only one small door to admit the light and air, and being roofed with a thin thatching of reed*. There were others

* Otter, speaking of the Koordish encampments, says, "Comme ces gens n'ont point de maisons, ils font de grand trous dans la terre, où ils cachent si bien leurs grains qu'il est difficile de les trouver." (Otter, tom. i. p. 118.)

formed of two stone walls, with a covering of dark brown or black felt cloth, made of



the hair of goats, and every height was crowned by a watch-turret. These Koords had evidently chosen their present site for a residence, so as to levy contributions on every traveller that might pass their habitations. Although our people were dying with thirst, they would not stop, from the fear of being plundered. The Mehmaundar and myself, however, rode up to one of

these encampments, and were served with a bowl of "lubbon" by a tall, swarthy Koord, whose expression of countenance was peculiar and ferocious. He had long, sweeping moustaches, and dark, penetrating eyes. He saluted us with a civility quite at variance with his forbidding aspect; and I took the opportunity of asking him a few questions about the state of the roads and country. "In the present unsettled condition of Koordistaun," said he, "I advise you to keep a very sharp look-out, and I caution you against journeying after nightfall." We thanked him for his advice and civility, and rejoined our party. Our rate of travelling averaged at least four miles an hour, by which medium the muleteers reckoned their distances; between eight and nine hours being considered by them as a good day's journey.

We passed a large body of Koordish horsemen, all well armed and mounted. Their extraordinary dress and *tout ensemble* were so different from that of the Persians,

whom we had been accustomed to see for so long a period, that it gave a novelty to the scene, which was extremely interesting. Their benishes, arms, and the furniture of their horses resembled those of the Turks; and the ferocity of their demeanour was characteristic of their wandering, renegado lives. The whole group would have been a fine study of costume for Hayter's accurate pencil.

This was probably an expeditionary corps, as it consisted of at least a hundred men, followed by several horses with pack-saddles, ready to receive the booty (either live or dead stock) which they might be fortunate enough to capture. Seyyud Abdallah, the meh-maundar, said, that when an expedition of this kind is over, the Koords retreat with caution; but, at the same time, are ever ready to give battle, until they have reached their inaccessible mountains, and secured their plunder in a place of safety.

Two of the party joined us, and, in a mixed dialect of Turkish, Persian, and Hindoos-

tanee, asked me if we were going to Soolimaniah? "for," said they, "we also are anxious to visit that city, to pay our respects to Sooleymaun Basha, and, if possible, to obtain his head for a *football*." Not liking the appearance of these gentry, I determined to try at an escape by a *ruse de guerre*; so I exclaimed, with feigned astonishment, "Soolimaniah! Soolimaniah! we are bound for Hamadaun, to join a division of Prince Abbas Mirza's army, now *en route* to Kirmanshaw; whence we shall march against Sooleymaun Basha, from whom we expect to extort a considerable sum of money." This had the desired effect; for they faced to the "right about," and galloped off at a rapid pace towards their companions.

We rode on for thirty-six miles through a most productive and remarkably well cultivated country; the villages were so thinly scattered over it, that I was surprised to find so small an extent of land lying fallow. The inhabitants of these villages were cultivators, and shepherds also, which latter occupation is

not always combined with the former; their condition must have been thriving, if I might judge from the excellent quality of the land under cultivation, and the number of their flocks and herds*. There appeared a much greater extent of rich soil than they were able to cultivate, so they tilled only that which was situated nearest to their villages. These were well supplied with grain and wool, cheese and butter, which latter articles they dispose of to travellers, who they take care shall remunerate their generosity, and who, of course, always make an adequate return for the supply either in cash or presents of some kind or other.

The valleys which intersect this part of the country are always free from the excessive heats of summer, and, though chilly in some secluded spots, partake of a tolerably uniform and temperate climate. During the

* The military Koord holds the shepherd in great contempt; even the cultivator considers him in the light of an inferior. But the care of their flocks is generally assigned to their women and young children.

winter these valleys are covered with snow; and on the summits of the surrounding peaks, the patches do not disappear until the height of summer.

Continuing our route, we ascended an irregular and winding path, which brought us to the hamlet of Bogaum, situated on the bank of a small rill, which ran into the river Jakuntoo. Nothing could exceed the appearance of poverty which prevailed throughout this village, as Jaffer Kooli Khan, the governor of Maraughah, backed by five hundred men, had made a sudden attack upon the place by order of Prince Abbas Mirza. His royal highness directed that all the men taken alive might be hung upon the loftiest forest trees, and that the women should be destroyed by the sword. The khan was, however, obliged to retire after the loss of fifty of his own followers. Before he arrived, the Koords sent all their wives and children to the mountains, through rocky gorges, and over summits, which, to use their own expression, "are not often trodden

by human foot, and scarcely ever by the wild birds of heaven*."

Being unable to procure any forage for the cattle, or even refreshments for ourselves, we left Bogaum long before the dawn of day. Miraâdy, the object of our march, lay about thirty-eight miles distant, over a road which appeared very rugged. About noon, we passed a lovely plain, and through it several small gurgling streams meandered, literally matted over with water-cresses. Our servants were quite surprised to see us eat of them so heartily, for they would not even taste any until I repeatedly declared they were most delicious. Previously to our *entrée* into the village, we were met by its chief, who conducted us to his castle, where he ordered his women to give up to us the best room they possessed in the harem court. They instantly set to work clearing away their domestic

* Upon this (an attack) the Carducians left their houses, and their wives and children fled to the hills.—(Xenophon's *Anabasis*, or Expedition of Cyrus, Vol. i. Book iv, page 239).

utensils with the greatest good-humour, and lighted for us a cheerful fire, before which we spread our nummuds (carpets). These women crowded about Mrs. Mignan and the children with the utmost *empressement*, and accosted me with an air of the greatest cordiality; they had no wish, and certainly no reason to conceal their faces, which were fair and handsome, with large black eyes, and dark flowing hair. They went about entirely unveiled, and possessed no *mauvaise honte*, though it was considered a mark of rudeness to stare at them. Nevertheless, they were evidently much pleased at exciting our attention, and we clearly perceived that vanity was the characteristic of the sex, in this, as well as in other countries nearer home.

After being served with some delicious cheese made from the milk of sheep, and several excellent flat muffin-shaped cakes of bread, the chieftain of the village invited me to his own quarters, which were situated across an oblong square court-yard. A sheep was

slain, and, having been stuffed full of almonds and raisins, was now roasting before a roaring fire, around which several attendants were crouched. We discussed our meal *à l'Arabe*, and afterwards some of the party got up and danced around the room with great energy. They then chanted a war cry, which our mehmaundar, Seyyud Abdallah, assured me related to their robbing exploits, and to their successes over the Turks and Persians. They also had a regular chorus, in which all occasionally joined, and which pointed at the dishonour of a Koord flying from battle to his tents, where not only the tribe itself, but the very dogs shun the coward—

None shall wed the flying slave,
E'en dogs shall bay the dastard knave.

Seyyud Abdallah declared the whole party were marauders, and that some of them actually boasted of the number of Kuzzilbashes they had shot. This chieftain gave us dried fruits of several kinds, with deli-

cious sweetmeats and some most excellent sherbet.

On the morrow I smoked a chibouque with the village chief, and we then resumed our journey towards Soolimaniah, the capital of Koordistaun. The road led over several lofty ranges, whose summits were nearly divested of trees. Our position now became more elevated, until we at length reached a whole region of snow, which lay so very deep that our baggage mules had great difficulty in getting through it.

Towards sunset, we arrived at the outskirts of a miserable and dilapidated village, where we were kept waiting a long time before any shelter could be found for us, and, after all, were compelled to take possession of a hut, hastily emptied for the occasion, full of dirt and vermin. Every thing was in confusion, and our foolish mehmaundar Abdallah, instead of exerting himself, stood like a drunkard, biting his whip, without ever offering, on our account, the slightest assistance. Our evening meal was late and cold; and we

retired to rest as little pleased with ourselves as with our attendants.

Next morning, the inhabitants came in a body to assure us that it would be impossible to cross the mountains without lightening the mules; and that even then, the passage would be attended with the greatest difficulty. I thought this a mere pretext to extort money, so refused to employ them. However, they knew the state of the roads better than ourselves, and, following the muleteers, soon convinced us that their services were indispensable.

The morning was bitterly cold, and as we advanced towards the range we had to ascend, the cattle wound through a rut or channel, worn in the solid rock, where the width barely allowed our boxes to pass without touching its sides; we were frequently obliged to stretch out our feet in a horizontal direction, level with our horses' necks, to prevent them being cut or bruised by the rocks, which could not in any other manner be avoided. We found the northern side of this great

ridge extremely precipitous, and were most thankful to apply to the villagers for their assistance in supporting the loads, who triumphantly came forward shouting and laughing at our troubles.

The ascent was extremely steep and dangerous; it occupied the space of four hours, and the great depth to which the snow lay, proved so distressing to the mules, that we were forced to relieve them of their loads. Even this appeared to assist them very immaterially, as huge fragments of rock covered with snow lay on our track, and made them sink up to their girths at every step. Two of the poor mules, in endeavouring to recover themselves, rolled down a precipice with their burdens.

On nearing the summit, the road was so terribly furrowed by the dissolving snows, that I feared we should not have reached it; for the difficulty of this passage was considerably increased by the conduct of a strong body of Koords, who from the top of the mountain had been

watching our approach, and now commenced hurling large stones and fragments of rock upon those bearing our baggage.

In the expedition of Cyrus into Persia, and during the retreat of the ten thousand, it is said, that when Xenophon came to a valley which his men were to pass in order to climb the ascent, the Carducians rolled down vast round stones, these being dashed against the rocks in their fall, the splinters were hurled every way, which made it absolutely impossible to approach the road*.

Diodorus Siculus, as well as all other ancient writers, bears testimony to the warlike disposition of the Carducians. The ten thousand Greeks in their retreat to their own country, after the defeat of the younger Cyrus at the battle of Cunaxa, had to pass through their mountains, as they had determined to avoid the barren deserts by which they had approached from Issus, through Thapsacus, on the Euphrates, to

* The Expedition of Cyrus, Book iv., p. 247, Vol. i.

Babylon. These Carducians are described as a free and warlike people, enemies to the king, and very good soldiers, especially skilful and experienced in hurling great stones out of slings, and shooting in bows of a vast size and more than ordinary strength. These people galled the Grecians from the rising grounds, killing and wounding many of them; for their arrows, being above two cubits long, pierced both their shields and breast-plates, so that no armour could repel their force; and it is said that these sort of weapons were so extraordinary big, that the Greeks used to cast them as "Saurians," instead of their thong darts*. The posterity of these Carducians used the same weapons with the same success against the Romans in the expedition of Marcus Crassus, the death of whose son, who was pierced by these irresistible arrows, is so pathetically described by Plutarch. Mark Antony and his men, in their unfortunate retreat, felt the violent

* See Diodorus Siculus, Book xiv., cap. 5.

effect of them, which drew from him this exclamation, ὦ μύριοι! Happy the ten thousand Greeks, who being pursued by the same enemies, retreated with so much better success*.

Our old Katurjee Bashee, who had all along been quaking for the safety of his jaded mules, became seriously alarmed. "Stakhferullah!" he exclaimed, "there is enough of them to eat us; may the holy prophet Mahomed (blessed be his name) soothe their fury; ullah ukbar! God is most gracious! Had we only a dozen brave Kuzzilbashes we might have a chance with them, but, as it is, I shall certainly become a beggar. Ullah kereem! Ai kumbuckt! what dust has fallen on my head! oh, miserable man that I am!"

By the time we had reached the top of the mountain, the onward progress of the mules had been completely arrested, and our trunks thrown down upon the snow. The

* Xenophon's Works, as translated by Smith, p. 239.

fray now began in real earnest with huge club-sticks, sabres, and matchlocks ; the latter being surmounted by a double prong which was made exactly like an English haymaker's pitchfork.

The enemy soon lost the support of four of their party, who had been felled by " stout crab-tree," and were conveyed from the scene of action with broken heads ; and the remainder would, in all probability, have given way to this " *argumentum baculinum*" where so little was to be gained, had it not been for the presence of two or three of the ringleaders, who possessed a stubborn and determined spirit, urging on the others to revenge their wounded companions. When my family had alighted from the kajavahs, and I had conducted them to a high bank on the roadside, I loaded my pistols and went amongst the assailants, declaring I would shoot the leader if he did not desist. They then shouted out, " They are gunmen ; they have guns." This cooled their rage in a marvellous degree, and, on their retreating

to the mountain's edge, we pressed them hard, and succeeded in rolling them over its precipitous sides, whilst the snow shelved down upon their heads and nearly buried them beneath it.

Our Persian mehmaundar Abdallah, who had remained an inactive spectator of the whole scene, without ever moving a limb or a muscle, and whose courage oozed out at his very palms, like that of Bob Acres, now came forward, and, bowing respectfully, said, "Barik-ullah! mash-ullah! bravo! bravo! well done! excellent! may your servant find grace in your eyes; may your shadow never grow less!" but, instead of greeting him with the "Khosh amadeed," or even noticing his obsequiousness, I desired the fellow to return to Azerbijaun, as we intended henceforward to dispense with his services. This useless character had very coolly pocketed his tomaun a-day, but I took care to forward a "confidential report" of his cowardly behaviour by a return kossid (messenger), to my friend, Major Hart, who I subsequently

learnt succeeded in having him punished by the government authorities at Tabriz.

The result of this *fracas* was so satisfactory to us all, that our old monkey-faced muleteer and his assistants became much animated, and swore they would disgrace the mother of Abdallah on their return to Tabriz. They involuntarily exclaimed, " Poondh-be-Khoo-dah, God be praised, there is no deity but God, and Mahommed is his prophet." They also recited as they went along a part of the first chapter of the Koran, which all Mahommedans hold in great veneration; indeed, they esteem it as the quintessence of the whole book, and therefore frequently repeat it, as we do the Lord's prayer—"Praise be to God, the Lord of all creatures; the most merciful, the King of the day of judgment. Thee do we worship, and of thee do we beg assistance. Direct us in the right way, in the way of those to whom thou hast been gracious; not of those against whom thou art incensed, nor of those who go astray*."

* Vide the Koran of Mahommed.

After a most sudden and fatiguing descent from the mountain, which occupied several hours, we traversed its base in a southerly direction, passing on the right of a ruined karavanserai, whence most probably our assailants had issued. This mountain terminated abruptly in a sharp point; after rounding which, we entered upon a more open country, but still mountainous. The soil of all the valleys appeared of unequal fecundity, and was well watered by numerous small streams. The climate now became more moderate, and extensive tracts of open meadow land were observed, as were also several small hamlets, whose inhabitants sell the produce of their flocks and herds to the villagers of Bannah. Here also, we remarked the dwarf oak in extensive patches intermixed with rocks, which were matted over by creepers. We soon entered a thick jungle*, and wound through an endless

* The term "thick jungle" includes all cover, from close bush to forest trees.

variety of forest scenery. The masses of shade thrown down from the fantastic crags that burst abruptly forth—the luxuriant fertility of the hills, seen through the transparent clouds that floated along their forest-crested summits—the awful stillness, and the immensity of individual objects, teemed with beauty and delight. We gazed amid these wilds, until we turned away with a painful fulness at heart, as if our pleasure was too great for the frame that felt it. The snow-capped mountains were towering before us; the sea of forests spreading around: far below, a beautiful stream rippled in the sun, and sent up the music of its plash. The small oriental sepulchre, overshadowed by the turfah* (*Tamarix orientalis*), crested the banks on the opposite shore, whence streams spread through the bright green

* The turfah, or tamarisk, is a well-known tree which the people of Baghdad plant over their graves, and in other situations. It rivals the tallest cypresses in stature. (See the Arabic Materia Medica of Ibn Kibti, the Baghdadi, who flourished A. H. 711).

land they fertilised to where a bulwark of hills rose to the clouds beyond the white summits of Mount Zagros. In his description of this lovely country, Diodorus Siculus says, "In this part there are many shady valleys, a variety of pleasant gardens, natural walks, bounded on either side with all sorts of trees, and watered with refreshing springs, so that those who journey this way frequently halt here, and regale themselves in these pleasant places with great delight*."

To guide us through this sylvan bower, we hired a Koordish shepherd, who appeared to have just returned from the village of Bannah, and who performed his task most faithfully, being allowed no temptation to do otherwise. During the march, we passed a well-mounted troop of suspicious-looking fellows, who, as they greeted our guide, inquired most particularly after our health, and excited something more than my curiosity. I therefore told our servant, Meerza

* Diodorus Siculus, Book xix. cap. 2.

Hoossain, to ask him if these strangers would have relieved the mules of their loads, had we been fewer in number, or less prepared? "To be sure," he replied; "and *we* (meaning his own villagers) would do the same. Do you suppose that a Koord has any scruples, when a fair opportunity offers?" This frank avowal was uttered with the greatest *sang froid* imaginable, and created a hearty laugh amongst the Katurjees, who remarked that the guide would have no "fair opportunity" this trip, so we journeyed on together, highly pleased with our new companion, until the necessity of our acquaintance ceased. A very trifling "bucksheesh," for having thus profited by his *connoissance du pays*, satisfied him.

We passed an extensive Toorkomaun encampment beneath the declivity of an overhanging rock, which was covered with little black tents. The wild appearance of this camp, mingled with horses, asses, sheep, and goats, was highly characteristic of the place as the men met our sight, grouped together around

a fire which emitted its thin column of smoke. Had *we* known of their vicinity, we should decidedly have taken a circuitous route; and had *they* been aware of our approach, our baggage mules might have been lightened. These Toorkomauns were very inquisitive, demanding whence we came, whither going, &c., and ended their discourse by endeavouring to persuade us to remain during the night under the protection of their tents.

A little to the northward of Bannah, we crossed several rills, on the borders of which the marsh marigold (*Caltha palustris*) and the water-cress (*Sisymbrium nasturtium*) were inconceivably abundant. Not far hence was an extensive burial-ground, in which the graves were all distinct and separate, each having a rough block of calcareous sand-stone placed upright, both at the head and foot of the grave; while the intermediate space, instead of having a slab placed down horizontally, was planted with flowers, or covered with broken pieces of tile and pottery.

None of these stones had any inscriptions, but over some few graves (of chieftains, perhaps) were built low circular cupolas, ornamented, plastered, and whitewashed.

There certainly exists a resemblance between the funerals of the Koords and those of the Hebrews. Every reader of the Bible must remember the anxiety expressed by Jacob to be buried in the family sepulchre in Canaan. "And the time drew nigh that Israel must die: and he called his son Joseph, and said unto him, If now I have found grace in thy sight, put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh, and deal kindly and truly with me; bury me not, I pray thee, in Egypt:

"But I will lie with my fathers, and thou shalt carry me out of Egypt, and bury me in their burying-place. And he said, I will do as thou hast said.

"And he said, Swear unto me. And he sware unto him. And Israel bowed himself upon the bed's head.

"And he charged them, and said unto

them, I am to be gathered unto my people: bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite.

“ And Joseph went up to bury his father: and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt*.”

Joseph likewise exacted an oath from his people to take his remains with them when they might leave Egypt.

“ And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die: and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

“ And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence†.”

In like manner, if a Koord dies at a distance from his native village, the inhabitants are bound to remove the corpse, and inter it with decency. We more than once met

* Genesis, chap. xlvii. 29, 30, 31; chap. xlix. 29; chap. l. v. 7.

† Genesis, chap. l. 24, 25.

parties escorting one who was "never more to smile or weep in this mortal world," and, on asking a few questions of them, they spoke of the ill luck that would attend those who might neglect to convey a body to its "proper place of rest." Unlike the Persians, the Koords have a great respect for these "cities of the silent." We saw some graves decorated with flowers and garlands, which, we were told, after a certain period were removed. The Egyptians also observe a similar custom. Maillet says, "the women in Egypt go at least two days in the week, to pray and weep at the sepulchres of the dead: and the custom then is to throw upon the tombs a sort of herb, which the Arabs call 'rihan,' and which is our sweet-basil."

CHAPTER XII.

Bannah—Conversation with Travelling Turks—Luxuriant prospect—Beauty of Koordistaun—Extensive View—Bostan—Vegetable Productions—Horses—Flocks and Herds—Butter—Koordish Encampments—Koordish Houses—Passage of Zagros—Xenophon's Retreat—Tumuli—Soolimaniah—Military Force—Trade of Soolimaniah—Its Climate—Its Husbandry—Honey and Manna.

WE reached Bannah at nightfall, nearly exhausted by fatigue and hunger. It appeared to be a miserable hamlet; but the chief gave us the best house in the place, and some excellent coffee. I wonder how these people lived before the discovery of this beverage. In the most obscure khan you are sure of meeting with a "kowwajee," and if you refuse the proffered cup, it is considered a very great breach of civility.

Some Turks had just arrived from the "Burreah," or flat country bordering the Tigris. During the evening, they sent in to request that I would share a pipe and coffee

with them. After we had smoked together in silence for some time, one of them, who was treated with marked deference and respect by the others, said—

“ We have just arrived here from Baghdad, and are travelling ‘chapper’ (post) to Tabriz. May we ask, whence you come, and where you are going? Have you any money, or any powder? Are you a Russian (*ooroose**) spy? Perhaps you intend to enter Daoud Pasha’s service. Do you know he has already taken one ‘Feringhee†,’ (alluding to Lieutenant Littlejohn, formerly Adjutant of H. M. Second, or Queen’s royal regiment of foot, at Bombay), who is teaching the Arab fellahs to make fools of themselves?” One of his companions here interrupted him, saying—“ That man was not a ‘Feringhee,’ but one of the ‘Ingreese‡,’ from Hind, and

* This word signifies either a Russian subject, or the country lying to the north-west of Georgia.

† Feringhee, Frank. The name given in these countries to Europeans generally.

‡ Ingreese, Englishmen, women, or children.

a sharp fellow too; though I don't like to see such changes, or the Tchokodars may be turned into the Great Desert."

After they had rattled on in this way for some time, I asked them what had occurred at Baghdad? Another Turk now raised his head, and, without ceasing to attend to a large coffee-pot that was on a charcoal fire, began thus—"By my soul! Daoud Pasha, although he is our master, is a very rebel. He will soon have neither Tartars*, nor Tchokodars†: he prefers those Giaours to us already. What can we possibly do, if the pashas are allowed to eat us as they like? We must all fly to these mountains, and become Koordish robbers! We have good reason to be discontented, when *we* are taxed instead of those uncircumcised dogs of infidels. Even the 'ooroose' have revolted against Mahmood, and the 'Ingreese' (English nation) now refuse to pay us any tribute. Mahmood

* Turkish messengers, couriers, and postmen.

† Ich-Agâsis of the Pashalic of Baghdad, pages of the pasha's presence.

Sooltaun is more like one of your nation than a true believer. He likes all your ways better than his own: he has even learnt to drink like 'Shytaun' (Satan). But, God is great: Mahommed is his prophet! He distinctly foretold all these changes; and as for that son of a dog Mahommed Ali, Pasha of Egypt, who has done all this, may 'Ullah' grant that his eyes will burst!" "Inshallah! Inshallah! (Please God, it may be so!)" shouted the rest of the Turks, who appeared highly amused with their companion's harangue, and who continued for some minutes bestowing upon it their utmost applause.

On our quitting Bannah, the temperature became much milder, although our elevation was still great. The country was hill and dale, and overspread by one continued coat of verdure. The sloping sides of the mountains were covered with the oak and walnut-trees; and to us, who had seen so much bareness of wood in Persia, it was a luxuriant prospect. The road led through wild and rocky defiles, and by the side of a rapid torrent. We

followed its rills, which were finely fringed with willows: it is this plentiful supply of water which renders these tracts so fertile. In Persia, on the contrary, this blessing is most scantily given; the hills and plains are equally destitute of wood, and a few trees only are seen in the environs of cities. Whoever has travelled through Turkey, Persia, and Koordistaun, as we have done, will assuredly admit the superiority of the latter country, in grandeur, beauty, and fecundity. But, since the beginning of that time from which we have any authentic records of her history, wars, dissensions, and violent struggles, have scared away improvement, and Koordistaun is still

“ An unweeded garden
That grows to seed; things rank and gross in nature
Possess it merely.”

In ascending another lofty ridge, the poor mules had to walk upon the very edge of a precipice, where the least false step would have consigned them to inevitable destruction; yet the confidence of the muleteers in

the steady tread of their animals, was such as to make them trot on without the slightest apprehension. From the summit of this range, a most sublime and extensive view burst upon the eye. Immediately in front of us appeared the snowy chains of Mount Zagros towering to the heavens, and beneath them several minor ranges extended gradually to near the base of the ridge we were commencing to descend; while on either side, and in the rear, were hills of various elevations, seen from the most advantageous point, and from a distance calculated to produce the most striking effect. Here was an assemblage of natural beauties—precipitous mountains, rich valleys, clear brooks, fantastic rocks, and wooded crags. Man alone has steeped this beautiful country in gloom, and rendered its history full of suffering.

The passes over the mountains of Koor-distaun are of the highest interest to a traveller, as he has an opportunity of observing portions of the earth which must, from their very nature, have been in their present state since

the creation. In their deep recesses he may observe, from the wonderful and varied position of their stratification, what have been the operations of Nature on the grandest scale. This converse with "Nature's charms" cannot fail to rouse the breast of any man to meditations bordering upon rapture.

Before we reached the mountain's base, we saw the capricious windings of the Bostan river, that issues from one of the Karducian ranges. Bostan, being interpreted, signifies the "garden," giving its name to a small hamlet and vale situated on the southern bank. The whole of the surrounding country is exceedingly fertile and picturesque, and its natural resources rival any part of Asia. It therefore well deserves the name of "Bostan." The hills are clothed in wood; the villages "navelled" in trees; and the soil being wonderfully prolific, manure is nowhere used. All the plains are planted with fruit-trees, and strewed with grain. The slopes of the hills form vineyards, and produce the *Palma Christi*, or castor-oil tree (*Ricinus*

communis, Linn.), from whose seeds the oil is extracted, and the tobacco plant (*Nicotiana tabacum*). Their summits are browsed over by flocks of sheep and goats; while horned cattle graze upon the lawns that skirt the villages. The vegetable productions are very exuberant. Wheat (goom), barley (shayeer), peas and every other kind of pulse, are abundant and cheap. Grapes and melons are not so richly flavoured as the Persian, yet stone fruits, such as cherries, plums, peaches, apricots, and nuts, are as fine as I ever ate in any part of Azerbijaun. The Koordistaun walnut is the largest in the world, and, if we except the strawberry, gooseberry, and currant, all the European fruits are abundant. The cattle are small but of a good breed, and so are the goats and sheep. These latter sell for about a shilling each, and their skins at a penny of our money. The horse, although decidedly inferior to the Arabian in form, is a match for him in enduring fatigue, privations, and sure-footedness in traversing a precipitous line of territory. It is not possible to name

any part of the world where he is better treated, nor can any one be more skilful in managing him than the Koord. His secret consists in using him with the utmost kindness; no blow is ever inflicted; consequently he is always on his mettle, and delighted to obey his master. Like the Arabian, he is from his earliest age reared amongst the children of the family, who bestride him without the aid of halter or bridle, and when old enough for use, no means of breaking him in is ever resorted to*. He then becomes proverbial for performing the most surprising journeys. Sir John Macdonald Kinneir assured me that, in one of his many journeys through Turkish Arabia and Asia Minor, he had ridden a horse which he had procured from a Koord, a distance of at least seventy miles without once alighting from his back; and in June 1828, I purchased a gelding

* The Arabs often use their colts on their attaining their sixteenth month, which is, of course, highly injurious to them. The Koords, on the contrary, never cross them until they have entered the third year.

from a native of Soolimaniah, which carried me from Baghdad to Tiflis in sixteen days. The distance *viâ* Koordistaun (the way I then also took) is at least eight hundred miles. In my opinion, geldings are infinitely preferable to stallions for long and fatiguing journeys. The endurance of these animals is surprising. Pliny says, "the Sarmatians, when they were about to make a great journey, prepared their horses two days before, by giving them no meat at all, and allowing them only a little to drink; and then it was said they were enabled to gallop them one hundred and fifty miles an end, without drawing in their bridles*."

All the flocks and herds yield much cheese and butter. The cows afford about half a gallon of milk daily, and the sheep and goats also assist to supply the dairy: cheese being always made of their milk. It is not made so well as it might be, though it is milk white, but too dry and salt. The butter is well flavoured, but of no consistency.

* Plin. Nat. Hist. Book viii. p. 42.

When kept in skins the taste is disagreeable, and it is often full of hairs. It is churned by putting the cream into a goat's skin, which is suspended to a cord, and tossed backwards and forwards by the females of the family. M. Castellan says, the Bedouin Arabs practise the same method. " Dans un peau de chèvre, encore garnie de ses poils, ils mettent le lait, comme dans une outre. Une femme Bedouine, après avoir fortement noué les deux bouts, et suspendu le tout à une branche d'arbre, en secouant l'outre de toute sa force, parvient à faire le beurre*." A fine oil for lamp-burning is extracted from the seeds of the simsin, or *Sesamum orientale*, and the seeds are also sprinkled on their loaves, which are made as flat and as round as our own pan-cake. The taste is by no means disagreeable.

The fixed hamlets of the Koords are not numerous as compared to those in the Persian or Turkish territories, where, over a similar extent of country, innumerable small

* Castellan, Mœurs des Ottomans, t. vi. p. 60.

villages may be met with. Numerous tribes of Koords live, even in the winter, under canvass, and pasture their flocks in the neighbourhood of their tents. In early spring, when the buds and blossoms appear, they strike their camp, pack all their property on the backs of their cows and oxen, and, with their wives and children, ascend, day by day, higher and higher upon the mountains; where, as regards climate, they enjoy an earthly Elysium. They are most particular in planting their picquets, which are relieved at stated hours during the day and night, and with the greatest regularity, so that they never fear a surprise; and being well armed with long lances and bucklers, pistols and sabres, fixed in and slung to their waist-belts, have nothing whatever to fear, should the enemy approach. The villages are all built in the same style; of large unhewn stones, which have no binding material whatever. They consist of two rooms only, having the floor and walls plastered with mud, and a roof

formed by cross beams of wood, covered with reeds, and over all, a thick layer of mud, mixed up with chopped straw. They are generally seated either upon the declivity of a mountain, or on the sloping sides of lesser hills and heights, whose summits are frequently crowned by a fortress, the paths leading to which not being discernible; indeed, their houses are, for the most part, concealed with great care and mystery. As they are buried in thickets, folded in the windings of a glen, scattered on the brow of a ravine, or the brink of a precipice, a stranger may travel through much of this romantic wilderness without discovering any traces of them.

We remained the night in one of these hamlets, and left, shortly after day-break, to cross Zagros, and proceed to the capital of the kingdom. The morning was unusually sultry; and during our journey a dreadful storm of rain, hail, and sleet, accompanied by violent gusts of wind, thunder, and lightning, broke upon us. We were soon enveloped in a thick fog, which reminded me

of the situation of the ten thousand Greeks under Xenophon, during their ever-memorable retreat over these very mountains. They were hidden from the enemy by a *mist*, similar in density to the one we now experienced; for we could not even see the roadside, although we were only two yards distant. We appeared to be riding on the bosom of the clouds. The road was so slippery as to render the utmost caution necessary, and all around was of a Stygian darkness. The forked lightning that shot through the mist, was the best light we had to depend on, for the black clouds hung so completely around us, that we were at length obliged to take shelter under an overhanging rock. There was no hope, however, of the storm ceasing, and, afraid of being benighted, we again set forth.

Having reached an immense height, the clouds suddenly swept away, and a vast extent of mountain, ravine, and glen, lay exposed to our glance, but they were again as quickly obscured by the passing clouds. Still

ascending, we came to a point whence we indistinctly saw the city of Soolimaniah, situated, apparently, beneath our very feet, in the hollow of an undulating plain, encompassed by an amphitheatre of mountains. Our descent became extremely difficult, for the path was entirely furrowed by mountain torrents, that wriggled across our track like serpents. The jagged rocks rose perpendicularly on either side, covered with patches of dwarf oak, and a vast variety of wild briars and shrubs. Occasional openings afforded glimpses of the undulating valleys below; in other parts, again, the gorges were so narrow and precipitous, that a small portion of the zenith only was visible.

We found this pass far more difficult than any part of Mount Caucasus. It answers the description given by the guides of Xenophon. "In their march, they came to a mountain that commanded the road, and was possessed by the enemy, whom they were either to dislodge, or to be severed from the rest of the Greeks. Encouraging one another, they

made their attack upon the mountain in columns, not surrounding it, but leaving the enemy room to run away, if they were so disposed. Accordingly, the barbarians, seeing our men marching up the hill, every one, where he could, without discharging either his arrows or his darts upon those who approached the road, fled and quitted the place. The Greeks, having marched by this hill, saw another before them also possessed by the enemy. This they resolved to attack likewise; but Xenophon considered that, if he left without a guard the hill they had already taken, the enemy might repossess it, and from thence annoy the sumpter-horses, as they passed by them, for, the way being narrow, there was a long file of them*."

It is extremely difficult to trace his exact route from the account given by Xenophon of his retreat, but, unless a total change has taken place in the features of the country, this must be the pass by which he crossed

* Xenophon's Works, page 238.

Mount Zagros in his passage to the Euxine, since no other is practicable during the depth of winter; and it was at that inclement season of the year (January) that the retreat was effected by the ten thousand Greeks*. Although six hundred leagues from their native home, in a country surrounded on every side by a victorious enemy, without money, provisions, or a leader, Xenophon, the moment he was selected from among the officers to superintend the retreat of his countrymen, rose superior to every danger. Notwithstanding the continued day and night attacks of the Persians, he crossed the rivers and deserts of Assyria, gained the summit of the Carducian mountains, and refreshed his fatigued companions. This celebrated retreat was at length most happily effected; and the

* The whole of Koordistaun is highly elevated and excessively cold for the greatest part of the year. The severity of the frosts is more painful of endurance than that of most northern latitudes, for the valleys are from five to six thousand feet above the level of the sea, and the tops of the hills covered with snow for eight out of the twelve months.

brave Greeks returned to their homes, after a march of one thousand one hundred and fifteen leagues, which was performed in two hundred and fifteen days! There is not, assuredly, any military exploit like it in all history. Napoleon's celebrated retreat from Moscow was nothing compared to this; for any good pedestrian may perform the journey from Moscow to Paris in little more than a fortnight, and the French grand army got relief in Saxony, which enabled them to fight the battle of Leipzig. But here was fighting every inch: sixteen hundred miles from home, surrounded by thirty millions of enemies, their retreat cut off, and an army of eight hundred thousand men ready to oppose them at every step! The whole of these particulars would have been buried in oblivion, had not the great philosopher who planned it, employed his pen in describing the dangers he had escaped, and the difficulties he had surmounted.

On nearing the city of Soolimaniah, we passed a tope or mound of considerable

magnitude, which appeared like an artificial elevation, or gigantic molehill, perhaps thrown up to mark the tomb of some great chieftain. Indeed, throughout the whole country, many of these tumuli can be traced spreading over plains, and situated near running streams. I cannot, however, identify any of them as tombs from personal examination, though I do not doubt that research would be amply repaid, and that these heaps would disclose the ruined sepulchres of the Greeks or Romans.

Soolimaniah is most romantically situated on the northern bank of the Diala* (the Delos), in a rich, extensive, and well-watered valley, irregularly formed by the base of the surrounding mountains. It is supposed to be on the site of the ancient Siozuros, *vel*

* The illustrious Rennell, in his map of the environs of Babylon, calls this river the Median Choaspes, to distinguish it from the Susian Choaspes. It is also known by the name of Delos, both in our own modern maps, and in the country itself.

Shehrazour*. The city, unlike most Mahomedan towns, is unwallèd; its houses are flat-roofed, low, and well secured against the cold and snows of this elevated region; but its streets, like all Oriental towns, are irregular, narrow, and dirty, though its climate is decidedly fine, and the inhabitants, who approach to the number of twenty-five thousand, are hardy, active, and robust. Their expressions of countenance are, however, harsh, and their complexions dark.

* Scheherzour, le nom d'une ville du pays des Curdes; qui habitent dans la province de Fars. Cependant, cette ville appartient plutôt à la Babylonienne, ou Chaldée, et l'auteur du *Leb Taurikh*, dit qu'Alexandre le Grand y mourut, ce qui s'accorde mieux avec nos historiens Grecs et Latins, qui font tous mourir ce prince dans la ville de Babylone. Les Turcs appellent ordinairement cette ville, Scheherzoul, qui passe pour être la capitale du Curdistan. (D'Herbelot de Molainville, *Bibliothèque Orientale*, Paris, 1697, p. 783.) Shehrazour is a town which the Koords have seized on. The Turks call it Scheherzoul. (Ebn Haukal.) According to Persian chronicles, Alexander the Great died at this place. (See the *Epitome of the Universal History of Persia*, p. 26.)

The government of Soolimaniah is administered by a pasha, who is by birth a Koord, subject to neither Turk nor Persian. To please the Russians, he has occasionally sent a present in cash to the Prince Royal of Persia, and Field-Marshal Paskewitch is desirous of taking him under his *especial* protection, that in case of need he may be induced to furnish cavalry to harass, by their sudden and repeated incursions, the inhabitants of those countries by which they are bounded*. For such a duty they are eminently fitted. The military force for the defence of the town does not exceed two thousand men. About a fourth of that number are often in attendance at the palace, which is the pasha's residence. It is a mean and dilapidated-looking pile, composed of spacious courts and extensive enclosures. The trade of the place is very inconsiderable, and is

* A Koordish chieftain assured Fraser, that if a thousand Europeans of any nation made their appearance amongst them, twenty thousand Koords would immediately rise and join them.

entirely in the hands of a few Armenians, who are the agents for some wealthy Baghdad merchants. They send gall-nuts, gum, manna, dried fruits, nuts, tobacco, and many other productions of the country down to Baghdad, receiving in exchange a few Indian commodities, which are conveyed up by the Tigris from Bassorah. They also supply all the wants of the migratory tribes, receiving in payment the produce of their flocks and herds, which they either use, resell on the spot, or export. Sir John Macdonald Kinneir, in his map appended to his valuable geographical memoir of the Persian empire, has marked down Sennah as the capital of Koordistaun. But the wâly, or chieftain of that town, is a mere creature dependant on his majesty of Persia, to whom he transmits an annual tribute. The father of the present wâly was an independent chief, but he became deranged; indeed, madness seems to run in the family, for the son has given many proofs of it. Were he residing in England, a commission of lunacy would

be immediately taken out against him by some considerate and *disinterested* philanthropist.

Soolimaniah forms a central emporium for the produce of the neighbouring districts, which furnish a vast quantity of grain; especially the undulating plains and valleys, which, being well watered by numerous small streams, are of unequalled fertility; whilst, on the sloping spurs of the mountains, the soil is stony and arid, and, of course, less productive. In the months of December and January, deep snow falls, and the streams are partially frozen up. Towards the end of February and March, milder weather sets in, and in April it is warm on the plains. In May and June, rain prevails, and during July, August, and September, the days are sufficiently hot. The easterly wind always bears the sirocco along with it, which induces the same enervating effects as is experienced in the Mediterranean. The westerly breezes are, however, always cool and pleasant. The cultivators around Soolimaniah turn up their fields for a few inches only in depth, with

a plough of the lightest and most simple construction, drawn by a pair of oxen. Towards sunset they quit their labours, throwing their ploughs over their shoulders, and return with them again in the same manner on the morrow. In some parts of the country, the share even is of wood, and the implement itself of the same light construction as it appears to have been in the days of Samuel.

In the vicinity of Soolimaniah, they begin to prepare the ground for sowing in March, and gather the harvest during summer (June). Wheat (*Triticum sativum*, Linn.), of which there are two or three varieties, was said to yield, in the most fertile positions, from ten to twelve fold, and in others from seven to eight fold. Barley (*Hordeum vulgare*, Linn.) is sown alternately with wheat on the same ground*. Cotton (*Gos-*

* Pliny says the wheat and barley had "leaves of the breadth of four fingers," (Lib. i. s. 193.) "Though I know," says Herodotus, "that the millet and the sesame of that country grow to the size of trees, I will not describe them particularly, lest my account should be considered fabulous."

sypium herbaceum), rice (*Oryza sativa*), maize or Indian corn (*Zea mays*, Linn.), sugar cane (*Saccharum officinarum*), millet (*Holcus saccharatus*), clover (*trifolium*), are all very abundant. The other productions of the valley are various: consisting of beans, lettuces, lentils, melons, cucumbers, leeks, garlic, onions, and an infinite number of leguminous herbs and vegetables. The hilly parts are covered with aromatic plants, yielding to the bees, who hive in the crevices of hollow trees, such an abundance of honey as to supply the inhabitants with an article of food, and with wax for sale. Honey from the rocks, is repeatedly referred to in the Holy Scriptures as a delicious food, and as an emblem of plenty; and manna, which fell from heaven to feed the Israelites in the Desert, here forms an article of food and commerce. It exudes spontaneously from the stem of the "camel's thorn," and when gathered by the peasants, is found mixed with decayed leaves, which give it a dark green colour; but, when purified, it becomes

as white as loaf sugar. Its consumption, in the confectioners' shops at Baghdad and Bassorah, is immense; and would, doubtless be a great acquisition, if procurable, at Verrey's, in Regent-street. Its taste is sweet, and, I think, very agreeable. All Mahommedans in this country are extremely fond of manna; especially the women, who use it with their sherbets*, and mix it with flour and sugar-candy, kneading it into small round cakes, for their own private consumption. Its nutritious qualities are quite proverbial throughout the East. In the book of Exodus we read—

“ And when the children of Israel saw it, they said one to another, it is manna: for they wist not what it was. And Moses said unto them, this is the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat.

* These sherbets consist of various syrups mixed with water. Hasselquist says, that the violet is also used; and he adds, that when the Easterns intend to entertain their guests in an elegant manner, their sherbet is made of a solution of violet-sugar. Ice brought from the mountains is a constant ingredient.

“ This is the thing which the Lord hath commanded; gather of it every man according to his eating, an omer for every man, according to the number of your persons; take ye every man for them which are in his tents.

“ And the children of Israel did so; and gathered some more, some less.

“ And they gathered it every morning, every man according to his eating; and when the sun waxed hot, it melted.

“ And the house of Israel called the name thereof manna: and it was like coriander seed, white; and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey.

“ And the children of Israel did eat manna forty years, until they came to a land inhabited; they did eat manna, until they came unto the borders of the land of Canaan*.”

* Exodus, chap. xvi. v. 15, 16, 17, 21, 31, 35.

CHAPTER XIII.

People of Soolimaniah—Koordish Hospitality—Travelling in the East—Koordish Costume—Female Head-dress—Koordish Women—Use of the Veil—Tinging the Eye-brows—Painting the Eye-lids—Tinting the Finger-nails—Taste in Beauty—Houses in Soolimaniah—Habits of the Koords—Ancient Custom—Religion of the Yezidees—Roostam Agha—His Importunity—Scotch Shawls—Locusts.

HAVING an introductory letter from the prince royal of Persia, to the pasha of Koordistaun, he immediately ordered a house for our accommodation in the best quarter of Soolimaniah, where we found the people extremely civil and obliging. Indeed, they pride themselves on hospitality; but how its duties are discharged, depend entirely upon circumstances. In the summer of 1828, I adopted the Turkish dress, wore a long beard, and passed through the heart of this country accompanied by a Koord, and an Osmanlee, who pretended to be a lineal descendant of the prophet, and who was a man of unusual information for his country. We

travelled together a distance of seven or eight hundred miles without spending a bajoglee*. The Osmanlee actually assured me the people pushed their hospitality to such an extent, that he was offered a bride at every village we passed through; "but," added he, "as I was your mehmaundar, I could not indulge myself so much, though the offer was difficult to forego." Notwithstanding his age was upwards of three score years, he had taken advantage of the utmost latitude of the Mahomedan law, and, in addition to his four wives at Baghdat, he had so judiciously distributed others at every town between that city and Tabriz, that he seldom slept from home. The Osmanlee's name was Ishmael—by profession he was a messenger—had often served British travellers, and certainly, if I might judge from the testimonials he had in his possession, had given them infinite satisfaction. On this journey I did not disguise myself, but retained the English costume; consequently, I found travelling here much

* A Dutch ducat.

more expensive than either in Turkey or Persia. Any sum under four or five hundred pounds per annum is quite insufficient. A man may scramble at the risk of his life through this or any other Eastern country on a mere pittance, but to travel for information, and to pass in security, and without any great molestation, the above sum is indispensably necessary. I strongly advise all travellers who propose to visit Koordistaun, to wear their own dress, for then their persons will be held sacred; whereas, should they adopt a foreign garb, although far greater opportunities would, doubtless, be afforded them for observing the country and its people, they might be knocked on the head for the value of a decent pair of "shulwars" (unmentionables). When I first journeyed through Koordistaun, we had some very disagreeable rencontres, but on the present tour I felt more secure than if we were travelling through most parts of Ireland. It is not, however, always safe to trust to the strongest professions, for there is no doubt that cruelty

and avarice characterise the Koords, though they by no means hoard their money, but prefer converting it into horses, mares, matchlocks, pistols, lances, and ornaments for their women. Cash is not current amongst them, except in large towns. We found it difficult to get change even for a tomaun.

The gay and gaudy hues of the Koordish costume are singularly striking and picturesque. They combine a mixture of the Turkish with the native habit. The chief characteristic which pertains to the latter, is a thick red felt skull-cap, drawn close to the forehead, and hanging down as far as the back of the neck, like a long bag. A silken tassel, generally of blue, is attached to its point, and a shawl of the same material, with red and yellow stripes, is wound round the cap and encircles the head of the wearer. This shawl has long knotted cords ending in a variegated fringe, which hangs on both sides of the neck, and floats over the shoulders. The outer robe, or "joobbah," is made precisely after the Turkish fashion,

of rich Damascus striped satin, buttoned close round the neck, and reaching as low as the instep. This cloak is confined near the waist, by a strong leathern girdle, which is ornamented with embossed studs of silver, and fastened by a clasp of the same workmanship and material. Within this belt a rich jowhar, or water-bladed dagger is concealed. Its ivory handle is the only part seen. Very wide stamboul "shulwars," are worn bulging over the ankle, and terminating by a pair of red or yellow hessian boots with pointed toes. Neither stockings nor socks are ever worn. In winter the cloak or abbah is always used. Its material is of woollen twist, about the thickness of our own patent Mackintoshes, and generally ornamented with a long stripe of gold thread, extending from the left shoulder to the back. The men (with the exception of those who travel into Turkey and Persia) never shave their heads, and always allow the beard and moustaches to attain a great length.

The women dress in much the same style

as the men, and, like their sex every where else, are very fond of personal ornaments; they accordingly sport a profusion of gold and silver coins, which are always of great value and antiquity, and which adorn their head-dress. This was decidedly the most extraordinary *coiffure* we had ever seen: it consisted of a wicker frame thickly padded over, fitting tight to the head, and covered with chintz of the gayest colours. Its shape is shewn by the subjoined sketch.



Some of the head-dresses were studded with artificial flowers, feathers, and tinsel; others had merely a shawl tied round them, with the ends hanging down the back. Over the forehead, the hair of the wearer is cut short; but a ringlet hangs down on each side of the face. The *crown* ornaments are sometimes mixed with engraved gems, and even most valuable antique cameos have been seen hanging therefrom. M. Raymond, an officer of artillery in the service of his highness the pasha of Baghdad, assured me that one of his brother officers, also in the service of the Baghdad government, had once met with a beautiful cameo on the forehead of a Koordish damsel, from whom he purchased it, and sent it as a present to Napoleon Bonaparte.

The women of this country are neither immured within the harem walls, nor compelled to wear the head or face-veil; and, as regards freedom of speech and action, they are on a perfect equality with the ladies of Europe.

On entering the house of a Koord, you

are not annoyed by the females rushing in every direction to escape notice. During our stay amongst them, we invariably met them unveiled, even when in the presence of the other sex. When they paid a visit to my lady, they expressed no wish that I should withdraw, on the contrary, they preferred my being present. It is not the etiquette of the country that they should dine with their lords, neither is it customary to ask after the health of a man's wife, but to say, as they do in Arabia, "How is your house?" But in every other respect they enjoy perfect liberty.

It is exceedingly remarkable that, of all the numerous Oriental tribes, the Koordish women only (the Toorkomaun and Illyaut are from the same stock) should have preserved amongst themselves this *really* modest and primitive custom. Scriptural passages warrant the assertion, that in the earliest ages of the world, courtesans only wore the face-veil, to avoid, perhaps, the disgrace of being recognised in public. We read thus

in the first book of Moses, of Tamar deceiving Judah.

“ And she put her widow’s garments off from her, and covered her with a veil, and wrapped herself, and sat in an open place, which is by the way to Timnath; for she saw that Shelah was grown, and she was not given unto him to wife.

“ When Judah saw her, he thought her *to be an harlot; because she had covered her face*.*”

As far as my own observation extended, the Koordish women were not half so good-looking as their husbands; nor did they possess those personal charms which might impose the necessity of much restraint, though the young girls, if dressed up in the Parisian fashion, would be considered pretty brunettes. They tinge the eyebrows with a paste, called in the Arabic, “ Khattat.” The eyes are painted with the “ Kahel,” and the lashes darkened with a sharp-pointed needle

* Genesis, chap. xxxviii. v. 14, 15.

or bodkin, which is passed beneath the lids. The angles of the eyes are also tinged, to make them appear unnaturally large. Moore, in his *Veiled Prophet of Khorassan*, thus alludes to it:—

“They mix the Kohol’s jetty dye,
To give that long dark languish to the eye.”

The Egyptian as well as the Koordish ladies resort to the same arts of the toilette.

This Eastern custom of painting the eye-lids is of very great antiquity: it certainly communicates to the eye, particularly when seen by candle-light, a languor so tender and fascinating, that no language is competent to express it. Hence the epithet *ἰοβλέφαρος*, violet-coloured eye-lids, attributed by the Greeks to the Goddess of Beauty; and the Arabian comparison of “the eye-lids of a fine woman bathed in tears, to violets dropping with dew.” Perhaps, also, Shakspeare’s

“Violets dim,
But sweeter than the lids of Juno’s eyes,”

should be referred to the same origin. Both Homer and Hesiod have applied 'ΕΛΙΚΟ-ΒΛΕΦΑΡΟΣ to Venus in a synonymous sense, as is evident from Pliny, who, amongst other properties of the helix, minutely specifies its purplish flowers. This *ὑπογραφὴ ὀφθαλμῶν* will likewise explain 'ΕΛΙΚΩΠΙΣ. Wincklemann has given a different interpretation; but let him speak for himself:—" 'Ελικο-βλέφαρος caractérise des yeux dont les paupières ont un mouvement d'ondulation que le poète compare au jeune ceps de la vigne*." Anacreon has alluded to the same cosmetic, when he required of the painter, that the eye-lids of his mistress's portrait, should, like her own, exhibit this appearance:—

'Εχέτω δ', ὅπως ἐκείνη,
ΒΛΕΦΑΡΩΝ 'ΙΤΥΝ ΚΕΛΑΙΝΗΝ·

and her eye, both the bright citron of Minerva's, and the dewy radiance of Cytherea's:—

* Hist. de l'Art de l'Antiq. tom. i. p. 460, ed. 4to.

Τὸ δὲ ΒΑΕΜΜΑ νῦν ἀληθῶς
 Ἀπὸ τοῦ πυρὸς ποίησον.
 Ἄμα ΓΛΑΤΚΟΝ, ὡς ἈΘΗΝΗΣ·
 Ἄμα δ' ὙΓΡΟΝ, ὡς ΚΥΘΗΡΗΣ*.

Another Mahomedan fashion equally essential to Koordish beauty, requires that the nails of the fingers and feet should be tinted with the auburn-coloured juice of the henna tree†:—

“ Some bring leaves of henna, to imbue,
 The fingers' ends with a bright roseate hue,
 So bright, that in the mirror's depth they seem
 Like tips of coral branches in the stream.”

Marriage is not so early contracted here as in most other parts of the East. A plurality of wives is allowed by law, but not much encouraged by the fair sex; who here, no less than in Europe, are prone to jealousy. So far as we could observe, there prevailed a strong mutual attachment between hus-

* Ode xxviii. 18.

† The Persians dye the backs of their horses with this red juice, as they consider that it prevents the saddle from galling them.

band and wife, and we were assured that their parental affection was extreme.

The Koords, like all other nations, differ in their taste regarding the fair sex: with them, as with the Turks, a redundant plumpness is sought after and honoured, and is considered the greatest trait of beauty. It is natural enough, therefore, for the ladies to vie with each other in acquiring a superiority in this particular; they accordingly eat all kinds of sweetmeats, dried and candied fruits, *hulwah**, manna, and several other vegetable substances grated down to a powder, in order that they may attain the utmost amplitude of Koordish ideas. A Koordish chieftain, after describing to me the beauty of his intended bride, as the colour of a thousand flowers, and her charms as the perfume which exhales from the “*attar-gul*,” said; with the utmost seriousness, “She is as large, Sir, as an elephant!” He considered this comparison the very acme

* A conserve composed of flour, sugar, butter or sweet oil, and pounded almonds.

of perfection*. A regulation girdle would be quite superfluous in this country to measure the ladies' waists, though Kempfer mentions an officer among the suite of the shah of Persia, whose duty it was at stated periods to measure the beautiful forms of the ladies of the harem, and if any of them exceeded the regulated size, they were instantly placed on "short commons." Kempfer calls this "holder of the girdle," *formæ corporis æstimator*.

The houses in Soolimaniah are, as I have already remarked, very meanly built—they are low and dark, having at most two or three small pigeon-holes, miscalled windows: in fact, the generality of them are little better than large-sized huts with flat roofs. In general the shape is that of an oblong square, the roof and flooring are plastered with mud, and the sides composed of sun-

* Solomon has compared his bride to "a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariots;" Sophocles, a delicate virgin to a wild heifer; and Horace, a sportive young female to an untamed filly: but the Koord's comparison surpasses them all.

dried bricks, mixed up with chopped straw. A partition divides the houses into two or more rooms, the inner ones being private, the outer open to all visitors. They contain scarcely any furniture beyond the usual nummud of felt placed along the sides of the ante-room.

The people are habitually abstemious, subsisting on the coarsest bread and manna, which latter they use instead of sugar ; and when meat is introduced at their meals, it has seldom undergone any further culinary preparation than that of boiling in plain water. They are extremely dirty in their habits, and in this particular cannot be compared either to the Turks or the Persians. Their occasional ablutions do not remove the evils attendant on the length of time they wear their clothes. In fact, they scarcely ever change, but permit their garments to drop piecemeal from their bodies. As regards cleanliness, no Asiatic can bear a comparison with the European. Even the Hindoo, so extolled by most people

for his extreme personal cleanliness, is, perhaps, the filthiest animal of the creation.

Although the Koords practise circumcision, like the followers of Mahommed, they do not insist upon the operation being indispensable; indeed, in Persia even, many noblemen assured me, that, should a convert to Islamism have passed the age of puberty, the operation would be dispensed with, if strongly objected to. The Arabs declare it was adopted as a preventive against a certain disorder. This ancient custom appears to have been borrowed by Moses from the Egyptians, since it was common to the Egyptians and Phœnicians. It is very singular that this rite was also performed by some American aborigines. Herodotus, Diodorus Siculus, Strabo, and others, bear testimony to the antiquity of this custom, which was practised not only by the Hebrews, but also by the Idumeans and Ishmaelites.

The language spoken at Soolimaniah is a mixture of Turkish, Arabic, Persian, and

even Hindoostanee. The people *profess* the religion of Mahommed, but know nothing whatever of its doctrine. Some of them are called "Yezideeah;" but this is a distinct nomadic tribe, living chiefly by themselves, and ranging the whole country between this city and Merdin. These people have a religion in which they do homage to his satanic majesty, as a prince and servant of the Most High God; and, unlike the Mahomedans, they are by no means tenacious of the chastity of their wives and daughters. They maintain that, as the devil exerts great sway on earth, he ought to be treated with every respect, and as they wish to make friends wherever they go, they divide their homage between the powers of light and those of darkness. They lead a pastoral and predatory life, and are, proverbially, the most daring robbers in all Koordistaun. Monsieur Febvier, in his *Travels*, gives an extraordinary account of this sect as they existed in his time. Their numbers consisted of two hundred thousand, scattered throughout Persia, Turkey, and

Koordistaun. They spoke the Koordish language, were fierce in war, but very hospitable when approached in their own tents: "a bread and salt traitor" was unknown amongst them. They were armed with bows and arrows, and, in the use of the sling, they exhibited the most surprising dexterity.

During our stay at Soolimaniah, we were visited by one Roostam Agha, a Yezidee. He was a man of middle height, robust figure, and had a slight stoop in the shoulders. His countenance was charged with a sinister expression, something between a sneer and a smile. His features were not handsome, the nose being heavy and clubbed, and the lips coarse and thick, but his complexion, although dark, was remarkable for its freshness of tint. He wore short moustaches, carefully combed upwards from the lips, and a beard *à la royale* tufted his chin. He pretended he had met us here before, and teased me so much to give him a shawl from "Fra ngistaun," that I heartily wished him at the tomb of his patron saint Scheikh Addi,

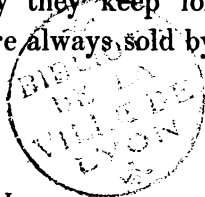
or at the devil. To his modest request, I said I had nothing with me except a few changes of linen, or I should have been happy to meet his wishes. He then took up a brace of pistols, which I carried in the holsters of my saddle, and eyed them with peculiar complacency. He was not long in asking for them also; but I refused to part with my fire-arms until we were clear out of Koordistaun. I, however, gave him a sword which belonged to our Meerza, on a promise to the latter of another of equal value, when we might reach Bagdad. The agha appeared disappointed, and declared he would rather have had a shawl; perhaps he calculated on receiving both sword and shawl. But the Easterns are like children, and always covet that which is withheld from them. Thus the agha was less pleased with the sword I gave him, than with the shawl I withheld from him. It is worth mentioning, that we have brought the manufacture of our shawls (the Scotch especially) to such an extreme de-

gree of perfection, that they are exceedingly prized by all the people of these countries. We bought several, previously to our quitting London, of Everington and Graham, for Dr. Cormick, who presented them at Tabriz to the prince royal of Persia, in whose numerous harems* a very unladylike scramble took place for their possession. As articles of trade, however, none would answer except the commonest patterns, for the prices they hold, even in England, are too high for either the Turkish or Persian markets.

The day before our departure from Soolimaniah, a strong southerly wind set in, and brought with it such myriads of locusts, that the air was literally darkened with them. The "royahs," or peasants, kept up a continued howling to prevent them from settling on

* When I was last in Azerbijaun, Abbas Mirza's several wives had each of them their distinct and separate establishments, to which were attached innumerable Georgian and Circassian girls, who were neither single nor married.

the cultivated tracts. The women and children rushed out of the city, and "bagged them" as articles of provision. Locusts are considered a great luxury in this country, and are hoarded up for feast days. They prepare them by first tearing off their legs and wings, immersing them for a short time in hot water, and then drying them in the sun, and sticking them on thin bamboo skewers, frying them as they do kabobs, with pepper and salt, and, when thus prepared, their taste is not much inferior to or unlike dried prawns. In this way they keep for any length of time, and are always sold by measure.



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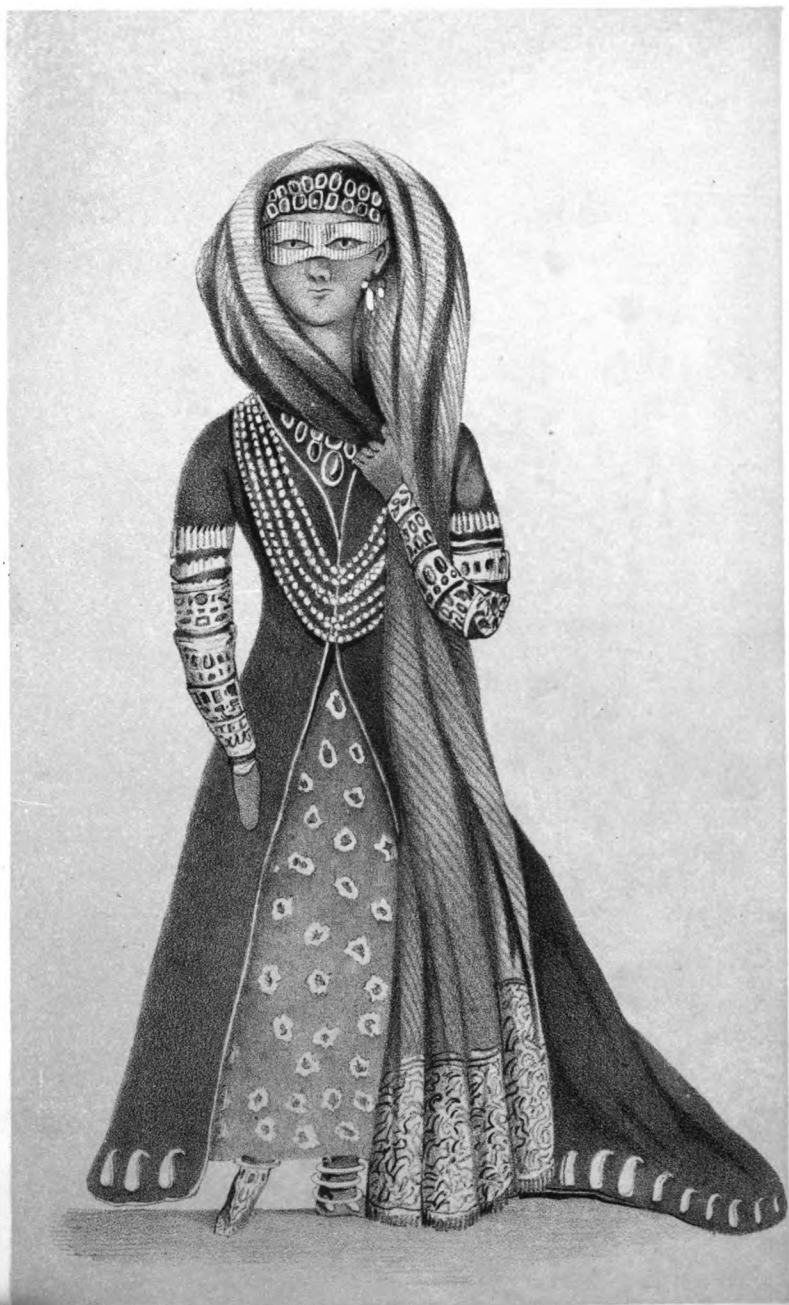
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*A winter journey through Russia, the
Caucasian Alps and Georgia ... into ...*

Robert Mignan



The Sultana of Muskat

A

WINTER JOURNEY

THROUGH

RUSSIA, THE CAUCASIAN ALPS,
AND GEORGIA;

THENCE

ACROSS MOUNT ZAGROS, BY THE PASS OF XENOPHON
AND THE TEN THOUSAND GREEKS, INTO

KOORDISTAUN.

By CAPTAIN R. MIGNAN,

OF THE BOMBAY ARMY, M.R.A.S.

AUTHOR OF "TRAVELS IN CHALDEA."

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A

WINTER JOURNEY

TO

KOORDISTAUN.

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Leave Soolimaniah—Vale of Soolimaniah—Migratory Shepherds—
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a River—Koordish Encampment—Canine Sentinels—A Koord-
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Koordish Boundaries—Locusts.

AFTER repeated delays and disappoint-
ments, the Koordish guide, who was ap-
pointed by the Pasha of Soolimaniah to be
our *compagnon de voyage* as far as the banks
of the Tigris, made his appearance, and
having concluded all our preparations for
the nature of our journey, which still lay
through mountainous regions, where the

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roads were no better than mere mule-paths, and often beset by marauding parties, we bade adieu to Soolimaniah at noon-day, on the 14th of April. In all my interviews with Sooleymaun Pasha, I found him frank and honest; and his conversation was far less tinged with Oriental hyperbole than that of any other Mahommedan I had ever before met with.

We had not proceeded far from the city before our guide stopped in a narrow lane, to receive into his saddle-bags sundry letters and messages for people who resided in the several hamlets through which we were to pass on our way southward. When we cleared the suburbs of the city we made another halt, to await the arrival of an Armenian merchant, who had requested permission to travel under our protection. I now found that the Koord had lagged far behind, and was conversing with people apparently of greater importance to him than ourselves. We were certainly not prepared for this detention, little thinking that

such an inconvenience would assail us in the very suburbs of the city we had just left.

As our track was most distinctly marked out, we were determined to experience no further detention, so, pushing on over a good road that led through a rich and well-irrigated vale, we soon lost sight of Soolimaniah. This lovely valley was surrounded by a chain of glorious mountains, whose loftiest summits presented the most fantastically shaped peaks, and were imbedded in snow. The oak clothed the declivities of these Carducian Alps, and the walnut-tree abounded in regions less elevated, diversifying the rich pasturage of the high tablelands, where the Koordish shepherds fed their flocks and herds. On taking a southeasterly direction, we soon crossed the river Diala, which, rising in Mount Zagros and pursuing a southerly course, falls into the Tigris near the ruins of Seleucia and Ctesiphon. The Lycus of Ptolemy derives its source from nearly the same spring.

The vale of Soolimaniah widened into a

broad expanse, and presented a soft and mellow undulating surface, which declined towards the east for about thirty miles. Vineyards clothed the sides of this valley, which was well watered by numerous mountain streams, and which may be considered a delightful specimen of Koordish climate and scenery. Indeed, the salubrity of the former is quite proverbial; and the latter is such as the admirers of the beauties of creation would delight to dwell upon. In the beautiful language of the inspired Psalmist, "The smaller hills are girded with joy; the pastures are clothed with flocks; the valleys also are covered over with corn; at the return of spring they shout for joy; they break forth into singing*." Clusters of little villages were scattered throughout the vale; but these, and all the other hamlets near which we passed, did not appear to contain a population equal to the villages of a similar size in the neighbouring coun-

* Psalm lxxv. 12, 13.

tries, because Koordistaun is still the seat of war and strife—a constant struggle being kept up between Koords, Turks, and Persians; as in olden times is said to have been between the Romans and Parthians.

We rode on for a distance of sixteen miles through this enchanting valley, and then entered the gorge of a lofty and precipitous mountain. The mountain itself was barren and uncultivated, but, on descending its southern side in an oblique direction to the village of Temar, this arid aspect vanished, and an undulating plain spread its bright green surface along the base of the craggy ranges, where herds of cattle were browsing under the watchful eye of their keepers. These pastors possessed no fixed habitations, but wandered about the country with their dark-brown tents, and sheep. They saluted us as we passed, and received the usual reply, “Aleikoum salaum; Ullah weeakoom!” God protect you; unto thee be peace! When we told them that our course lay to the “Bur-

reah," or flat country bordering the great rivers of Irak and Mesopotamia, they said, "You had better change your dress, and join us: you know not our happiness on these hills; here we live secure from oppression; and, should the pasha come to rob us, we enter the rugged passes of our mountains, where he can never find us." The women always accompany their husbands in these flights. They all ride *en cavalier*, and no horsemen can ascend the heights, or gallop down the declivities, with greater boldness.

To excel in horsemanship, is considered by the Koords of both sexes, as well as by the Arabians, a most essential accomplishment. Hence the boast of Amriolkais:—"Often have I risen at early dawn, while the birds were yet in their nests, and mounted a steed with smooth short hair, of a full height; and so fleet as to make captive the beasts of the forests. Ready in turning, quick in pursuing, bold in advancing, firm in backing; and performing the whole with the strength and swiftness of a vast rock which a torrent

has pushed from its lofty base. He makes the light youth slide from his seat, and violently shakes the skirts of a heavier and more stubborn rider *."

From Temar to Dolan the ascent is considerable, and the direction of the road nearly due south. After winding through a very narrow and rugged defile for two hours, we alighted, and, leading our horses up the steep and jagged hill, commenced ascending the celebrated pass of Durbund-el Bazian. This pass precisely accords with the account given by Xenophon of his passage through the defiles of the Carducian mountains.

As we advanced, the natural features of the defile grew more and more imposing, until the rocks, gradually approaching each other, seemed all at once to close in upon us without leaving a trace even of any outlet. Sometimes the path wound along dizzy precipices without any protect-

* See the *Moallakat* by Sir W. Jones, p. 10.

ing wall, and, at other times, it led past deep and rugged ravines, formed by the rushing of innumerable mountain-torrents, where the road was so narrow that the loads on the mules actually overhung these formidable chasms. On the left of our path was a frightful chasm, which admitted a strong mountain-torrent, that had evidently forced itself through the very heart of the mountain. We soon passed over an arch of just sufficient width for the passage of our Kajavaahs, and scaled an overhanging cliff whose sides were nearly perpendicular, varying from five hundred to fifteen hundred feet in height, without any interval between them and the stream. Their rugged bosoms gave nourishment to a few stunted oaks that hung to the scanty soil. Some distant banks appeared to produce the wild vine, others were tufted with small trees and bushes growing most luxuriantly, the continued shade furnishing them with moisture.

The arid chasm alone was naked, and

strewn with huge fragments detached from the topmost cliffs, which had rolled into the stream and formed rocky islets, around whose base the impetuous torrent was dashing. This strong pass, as I have just observed, presented so many windings in its course, that the eye could not penetrate beyond a few yards, and we were often at a loss to trace the direction whence the passage would issue out, so completely mountain-locked did it appear. Continuing our progress towards the south, though still ascending, we reached some ruined circular watch-towers and a parapet, which our guide said was called the "Gate of Koordistaun." The opening of this barrier was about twenty yards wide, whence some mouldering walls of masonry led down the hill; a strong hold in olden times, perhaps, against Roman inroads. At this point, a small band of armed men might arrest the advance of any force however numerous; it is difficult even for a single horseman; and the spot is most conveniently situated for overlooking

all the entrances into Koordistaun from the Assyrian side.

I think it is not at all unlikely that this position often became the scene of military operations. The early historians have been so loose and inaccurate in their accounts, that it is scarcely possible to trace the movements of the numerous armies that passed through Assyria into the country of the Carducii. There can be no doubt, however, that this was the formidable pass through which Heraclius marched, on his route to Ganzaca after the fall of Dustajird, because it is the only road by which he could possibly have reached Siozuros.

There is no part of the landscape which the eye wanders over with more interest than the crags of Durbund-el-Bazian, which stand up on every side in the most rugged and fantastic forms—sometimes strangely piled one on the other, and sometimes as strangely yawning in clefts of a frightful depth. We looked towards the rugged pathway we had scaled, and watched the

slow progress of the kafilah toiling up the steep ascent. As the road ran in a zig-zag direction, the mules were occasionally lost, but soon emerged again upon a higher point, hanging apparently on the verge of a precipice; notwithstanding which the katurjees pursued their way without the slightest apprehension.

We passed over the summit of this mountain, and commenced our descent by a path equally rugged to the one we had ascended on its northern face. A long, but dilapidated embattled wall, composed of very large stones, interrupted at intervals by round towers, extended all along the craggy hills upon our left, and the remains of an inner wall were slightly traceable, which appeared to have formed a sort of second line of defence to this impenetrable, and once castellated mountain range.

Our descent was extremely sudden. The ridges on either side of us were covered with small shrubs and oak-trees, producing a considerable quantity of gall-nuts. The

view from this point towards the direction in which we were hastening, developed an extensive plain, which seemed to dissolve into a flat waste, its horizon being indistinctly tinged by the Hamrine hills. To the north, or rear, a succession of mountain ranges rising successively one over the other, crowned by the snowy summits of Mount Zagros, presented a bold and picturesque view. Diodorus Siculus thus describes these parts:—"This country (on approaching it from Mesopotamia) as far as *the ladders*, as they are called, that is, the passes of Mount Zagros, is flat and low, exceedingly hot, and barren of provision; but the rest is higher, of a wholesome air, and very fruitful*." When we had descended about midway, and reached a more open passage, the muleteers halted under a small oak tree, and devoured the remains of a sheep they had just stolen, after which, they lighted their kaleoons, and pressed onwards at a brisk trot, chanting some rude and simple air.

* Diodorus Siculus, B. xix. c. 2.

On emerging from our rocky prison, we proceeded over a countless succession of calcareous hills, passing several villages by the way. On the afternoon of the 16th of April, we again entered a rugged defile, along the edge of a precipice, whose summit hung above our heads to a height of at least five hundred feet. We sent a man forward, to ascertain whether there was any likelihood of meeting a kafilah, as, after entering the defile, it would be utterly impossible either to turn our own loaded mules, or to pass those of any other party. The emissary did not return, so we concluded the passage was clear, and wound through it as rapidly as possible. Two of the mules sadly deranged the equilibrium of their loads, by striking against the elbows of the rocks, which caused some detention, as the katurjees were obliged to stop the whole caravan (the mules being linked one to the other by an iron curb-chain), and to cover the animals' eyes, previously to attempting any adjustment of the baggage.

Our train of mules had a very picturesque effect when it wound along these mountain passes. First of all, the tinkling bell of the leading mule is heard, breaking with its simple sound the stillness of the airy height; then the voice of the katurjee bashee, urging forward some overloaded straggler. At length, they emerge from the mountain pass, and present themselves in full relief against the sky with their gay and fanciful trappings, tufts, and tassels, with which the Persian muleteers are so fond of decorating them.

We now entered a cultivated valley of moderate size, and approached the banks of a stream, which appeared more than usually rapid: the head muleteer was anxious to ascertain its shallows before we crossed; and our servant, Meerza Hoossain, equally desirous to "astonish the natives," spurred onwards, giving his steed the reins, and sprang into the Rubicon, shouting, "Mubarek! mubarek!" The head muleteer also shouted out, "Wallah, billah! khuda

hafiz shuma!" May God protect you; and we rushed to the margin of the stream, where we saw both man and horse buffeting the current, which was almost too much for the poor Meerza, who with extreme difficulty succeeded in reaching the opposite bank; not, however, until he had visited *le fond*. Some of the katurjees were a little too late to witness this *début*, so they called out to him to repeat the feat; but the Meerza had by this time repented of his *fierté*, and now cut a most ridiculous figure, with his head as bare as a bedlamite's, the hairs of his beard hanging in stiff flakes, and distended like a rat's tail. His distress also was greatly increased by the loud laughter of the whole party, and by their shouts of Barick Ullah! Mash Ullah! At length he recovered himself, and stammered out, "I beg to remain where I am: as you have had your share of the 'frolic,' give me a turn of it." But although we quite agreed with him, that fair play was the first law of nature, we possessed no *penchant* for such an exploit,

but rode along the side of the stream, and sought a ford, which enabled us to cross to the opposite bank without any similar sort of achievement.

Winding round a hill, and diverging through a mysterious-looking path to the right of the road, which did not appear much trodden, we were conducted to a Koordish encampment, called Ibrahim Kanchee. It was a most dismal-looking place, but having travelled for so many hours, we were glad to accept even a bandit's invitation. Salvator Rosa never imagined a more suitable spot for a band of marauders. Shortly after our arrival, the chief of the camp assigned us a tent, and sent us a dinner consisting of a pair of grilled fowls, and some round cakes sprinkled over with the seeds of the simsin (*Sesamum orientale*). Our guide and an Armenian merchant were served with a wooden bowl of sour milk, and eggs fried in oil. After them came the owner of the tent, who was soon beard-deep in his meal, and, last of all, our old katurjee

bashee seized one of the wooden platters out of which we all by turns had eaten, and, gathering the fragments together, devoured them with the greatest avidity.

During the whole night, large fires blazed before the door of every tent, around which numbers of ferocious-looking dogs were crouched ready to attack all intruders. These faithful sentinels are attached to the camps of all the Nomadic Koords, and in form strongly resemble jackals. They have very long legs, and immense bushy tails.

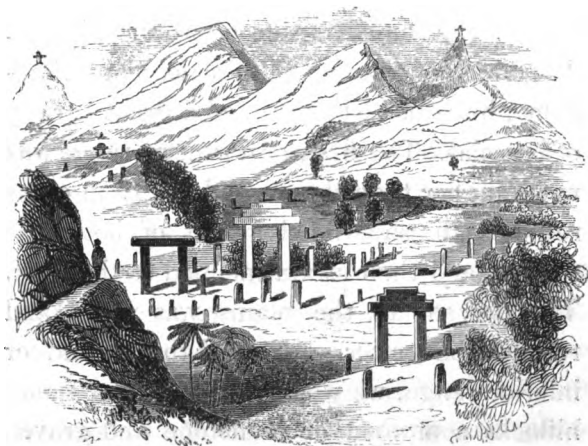
The attachment of the Koords to their chieftains is indescribably strong, and the influence of these chiefs over their tribe equally so. If one is ever slain in war, it is never forgiven nor forgotten. They carry on an everlasting feud, never ceasing until they have had their "blood revenge." I know not what power could ever succeed in bringing them under subjection; for not only is the whole country mountainous and inaccessible, but they are eternally flying from one end of it to the other, the brief duration of their stay

in any given spot being regulated according to circumstances. In all their camps the tent of the chief occupies a central position; round him his relatives range, and round these again his vassals form the outermost circle.

The demeanour of the chief of Ibrahim Kanchee was frank, manly, and courteous: I shall never forget the expression of his dark resolute eye, which beamed through his clear olive complexion. He was truly a fine specimen of the independent Koord—straight, clean-limbed, and erect. The figure of the chieftain in the foreground of Hayter's splendid picture of "Koords assisting Georgians in surprising and carrying off Circassian women," gives a good idea of him. The complexion of the Koord is darker than that of either the Turk or Persian: and the older he grows the darker he becomes, from exposure to the elements. This, by the way, is the case with most Asiatics, especially the females, and with the Anglo-Indian, *vulgariter*, "half-cast," in a superlative degree.

On the 17th of April, we quitted Ibrahim Kanchee at sunrise, and, after travelling for several hours, passed the second range of hills on the southern side of Mount Zagros. The first was composed of calcareous limestone, but this last contained a great variety of breccias. The first, or northern, range was much higher than the second; but, in other respects, the superficial aspect of both was similar, and their strata inclined to the west. The descent to the plains was steep and rugged, but, after we passed the second or inferior range, we wound through low sandy hillocks composed of sandstone and gravel. This part of the country wore a desert aspect, and many groupes of tombs were observed upon the sloping heights to the right. These tombs stood alone; there were neither villages in the neighbourhood, nor any traces even of encampments. Many were heaped closely together, as if some great engagement had taken place, and the slain had been hastily interred. The central tombs, however, had granite pillars of some

elevation, intending, perhaps, to mark the graves of chieftains of rank.



The influx of the Nomadic tribes from Assyria and Mesopotamia had in this neighbourhood set in so strong, that the Koords are seldom seen in these wilds: they can endure fatigue and privation without a murmur, but the plains of Persia or Arabia, are to them “murder and sudden death.” Their history is as mysterious, as their fate is severe. They disappear from the earth like apparitions.

tions, leaving no traces behind them. An unlettered race, their wars and their deeds of arms have ever remained a sealed volume to the inquiring world. No Ossian has transmitted to us in traditional rhapsodies their battles, heroes, or adventures.

The Koords are not very particular in regard to the limits of their boundary lines; but the neighbourhood of Kifri, to which town we were proceeding, is considered by them as the south-eastern frontier of their country. It is situated upon a branch of the Odorneh*, and is about fifty miles to the southward of the encampment of Ibrahim Kanchee. Our march was very wearisome, for the plain we had traversed was covered with young locusts, which gave ourselves and our cattle the greatest annoyance. They

* Supposed to be the Phycus of Xenophon. The natives call it the river of Delli Abbas. Kinneir, in his Geographical Memoir of the Persian Empire (page 297), says, "the Odorneh is formed by the junction of many streams which arise in hills between Kerkook and Soolimaniah. It pursues a south-west course, and falls into the Tigris twenty fursungs above Baghdad."

were extinguishing all vegetable life, and spreading the winding sheet of death over every cultivated tract*. How intimately acquainted was the prophet Joel with the rapacity of these legions when he exclaimed—

“He hath laid my vine waste, and barked my fig-tree: he hath made it clean bare, and cast it away; the branches thereof are made white.

“The field is wasted, the land mourneth; for the corn is wasted: the new wine is dried up, the oil languisheth.

“How do the beasts groan! the herds of cattle are perplexed, because they have no pasture; yea, the flocks of sheep are made desolate†.”

“The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses; and as horsemen so shall they run.

“Like the noise of chariots on the tops of

* The locusts are mentioned by Pliny, Book xi. cap. 29. They were so called from *loco usto*, because the havoc they made wherever they passed left behind the appearance of a place desolated by fire.

† Joel i. 7, 10, 18.

mountains shall they leap, like the noise of a flame of fire that devoureth the stubble, as a strong people set in battle array."

* * * *

"They shall run like mighty men; they shall climb the wall like men of war; and they shall march every one on his ways, and they shall not break their ranks.

"Neither shall one thrust another; they shall walk every one in his path: and *when* they fall upon the sword, they shall not be wounded.

"They shall run to and fro in the city; they shall run upon the wall, they shall climb up upon the houses; they shall enter in at the windows like a thief.

"The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble: the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining*."

* Joel ii. 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10.

CHAPTER II.

Kifri—Naphtha Pits—Antique Relics—Mode of Burial—Rings and Seals—Daoud Pasha—Punishment of Chaldaea—Journey Resumed—Burial Place—Turkish Prejudice—Desert of Khalis—The Mirage—Ajameeah Encampment—Dwarfish Chief—Inhospitable Reception—Banks of the Delos—Baggage Mules—Atmospherical Purity—Camp of Illyautts—Illyautt Hospitality—Illyautt Ladies—False Dawn—Persian Mules—A Halt—Howesh—Dates—Fuel—Rafts of the Tigris—Assyrian Boats—Approach to Baghdad.

WE reached Kifri at nightfall, and occupied a good caravanserai built in the Persian style of architecture. Its keeper told us the Persian troops from Kermanshaw, headed by the governor of that city, had recently sacked the town, and committed the greatest excesses. The inhabitants were distressed, and without any occupation. Even the Tartar communication between Baghdad, and Constantinople, was entirely cut off; and all this misery had been produced by

Persian depredation. The post-house was entirely deserted, its walls partially torn down, and the shops in the bazaar were unsupplied. The hills overlooking the place contained gypsum and naphtha, and wore a most arid and forbidding aspect. The only refreshing object was a tortuous stream, which wound round the walls and passed through several of the streets.

The naphtha pits or wells are situated between this town and Kerkouk, and the natives skim the surface of these pits with iron ladles, pouring the naphtha into sheepskin bags, which they transport, on the backs of asses, to Baghdad and other towns, for sale. These springs yield a profit of forty thousand piastres annually. D'Anville says, " Dans le voisinage de cette ville, il sort des rochers de l'huile de napthe, qui est reçue dans un espèce de puits; et je trouve dans une relation manuscrite d'un voyage au Levant, par le Pere Emanuel de St. Albert, visiteur des missions de son ordre des Carmes, et depuis évêque *in partibus*, qu'en remuant

la terre aux environs, il en sort des bluettes. On lit dans la Géographie Turque, qu'en cruesant la terre sur un tertre appelé Khor-Kour Baba, il en sort du feu qui fait faire flamme, et que des vases posés dans des trous qu'on y voie, bouillir l'eau dont en les a remplis; en ajoutant, qu'on éteint la chaleur de ces trous en les comblant de terre*." The naphtha, or rock-oil, of Menedi, near Kerkouk, is of the black kind, and is used as a substitute for pitch. The Baghdadees rub the keels of their boats with it, and the villagers at Samarah burn it instead of lamp-oil. Near Dawlakey, in the Persian province of Fars, I saw two fountains of white naphtha. The oil floated on the surface of the water, and the peasants collected it for the purpose of rubbing over their camels, as it prevents a cutaneous disorder common to that animal.

To the south-west of the town, we examined some mounds which encased the remains of a

* D'Anville sur l'Euphrate et le Tigre, p. 107.

Sassanian city. I made some excavations into the side of a hill, and found bricks assimi-



lating in quality and dimensions with those forming the walls of Ctesiphon. Among the *débris* I found an old iron seal-ring, and several thin silver Shapoorian coins, similar to those I had before met with at the sculptured ruins of Shapoor, near Kauzeroun, and in many other parts of Persia.

They weighed a drachma each. The king's head upon them was bearded, and

had long flowing hair: the diadem was ornamented with feathers, which resembles the Egyptian symbol of two wings supporting a moon and star. The characters, although not very legible, were in the Pehlevi language. The fire altar was, as usual, supported by two priests, and very rudely executed. Small burnt clay images, and urns filled with osseous remains, were also numerous in every ruined site throughout the country. Mr. Rich, the Honourable Major Keppel, Sir Robert Ker Porter, and other travellers, are of opinion that these urns contain the bones of Greeks and Romans rather than of Asiatics, from the presumption that such a mode of burial did



not accord with the religious opinions and institutions of Oriental people. The following passage from Erskine's Translation of the "Desâtir" will, however, prove the contrary:—"A corpse, you may place in a vase of aquafortis, or consign it to the fire, or to the earth." Commentary.—"The usage of the Fersendajians, regarding the dead, was this:—after the soul had left the body, they washed it in pure water, and dressed it in clean and perfumed vestments*; they then put it in a vase of aquafortis, and, when the body was dissolved, carried the liquid to a place far from the city, and poured it out; or else, they burned it in fire, after attiring it, as has been said; or, they made a dome, and formed a deep pit within it, which they built, and whitened with stone, brick, and mortar; and on its

* These rites may be found alluded to in Homer and in the works of other poets and philosophers of Greece. Lucian describes the dead in his time as washed, perfumed, vested, and crowned, *ὑπαίους ἀνθεσιν*, with the flowers most in season. Homer, Euripides, &c., *passim*. Lucian, tom. ii. p. 927.

edges, niches were constructed and platforms erected, on which the dead were deposited; or they buried a *vase in the earth*, and enclosed the corpse in it, or buried it in a coffin in the ground; and, in the estimation of the Fersendajians, the most eligible of all these was the vase of aquafortis." Engraved rings and seals are also found in great numbers, and are thus noticed by Herodotus, in his account of the Babylonians:—"Each person has a seal ring, and a cane, or walking-stick, upon the top of which is carved an apple, a rose, a lily, an



eagle, or some figure or other; for, to have a stick without a device was unlawful*."

Here the authority of Sooleymaun Pasha of Koordistaun ceased, to give place to that of the Turkish government, in the person of a zabit, who received his credentials from the powerful Daoud, pasha of Baghdad. Hitherto, the peasantry of Koordistaun, although despised by their military countrymen, were comparatively secure. But, throughout this extensive and once populous pashalic, the fellahs or serfs are reduced to the lowest ebb. They exist under the heel of an inhuman domination, haughty in its ignorance, and merciless in its creed. The government of Daoud Pasha is tyranny, his revenue extortion, and his law the sword. Assyria is fallen from her golden supremacy†, Chaldæa

* Herodotus: Clio, cxc.

† "The Lord will stretch out his hand against the north, and destroy Assyria, and will make Nineveh a desolation, and dry like a wilderness. Flocks shall lie down in the midst of her; both the cormorant and the bittern shall lodge in the upper lintels of it; their voice shall ring in the windows; desolation shall be in the

is condemned to be the haunt of the lion*, Nineveh is no more†, and Babylon is a ruin‡.

Cyrus, Darius, Alexander, Seleucus, Antigonus, Demetrius, Antiochus, Trajan, Severus, Julian, Heraclius, Omar, Hulakoo,

thresholds. How is she become a desolation, a place for beasts to lie down in!" (Zephaniah ii. 13, 14, 15).

* Chaldæa was once the most fertile region of the whole East (*Agrium totius Orientis fertilissimum*, Plin. Hist. Nat. lib. v. c. 26), and its government accounted the noblest in the Persian empire. Besides supplying horses for military service, it maintained about seventeen thousand horses for the sovereign's use. Exclusive of monthly subsidies, the supply from Chaldæa for the subsistence of the monarch and his army, amounted to a third part of all that was levied from the whole of the Persian dominions, which at that time extended from the Hellespont to India. (Herodotus, lib. i. c. 192). Such *was* the "Chaldees excellency."

"I will punish the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations. Chaldea shall be a spoil, and all that spoil her shall be satisfied. Come against her from the utmost border, open her store-houses: cast her up as heaps, and destroy her utterly: a sword is upon her treasures, and they shall be robbed." (Jeremiah xxv. 12; l. 10, 26, 37).

† Nahum i. 8, 14. Ibid. i. 14.

‡ Jeremiah li. 31; Isaiah xiii. 14; Jer. l. 13, 51.

Tamarlane, and Mahmood, have successively desolated and exacted tribute from this oppressed and violated region*.

“ I will break the Assyrian in my land, and upon my mountains tread him under foot†.”

“ I will also break in pieces with thee the shepherd and his flocks, and with thee will I break in pieces the husbandman and his yoke of oxen; and with thee will I break in pieces captains and rulers.

“ Babylon shall become heaps, a dwelling-place for dragons, an astonishment, and an hissing, without an inhabitant.

“ They shall roar together like lions: they shall yell together like lions’ whelps‡.

“ The wild beasts of the desert shall dwell there, and the owls shall dwell therein§.”

April the 19th.—We left Kifri at six o’clock in the morning, and at ten rested beneath

* Jeremiah xxiv. 14.

† Isaiah xiv. 25.

‡ Jeremiah li. 23, 37, 38.

§ Ibid. l. 39.

the shade of some turfahs, and by the side of a sluggish stream. Having passed an hour here, we proceeded, and at noon again alighted, to pasture our cattle beside a rill, from whose marshy bed long coarse grass and a species of calamus grew to the height of thirty feet, marking its irregular course through the plain, until it gradually became a speck in the horizon, and was lost. Still descending through an uneven valley surrounded by low hills, we crossed a branch of the Diala, which, in the summer season, overflows a low marshy plain of great extent. On the slope of the southern bank stands Kara-tuppah (the black mound), a small hamlet containing about eighty houses. We spent the night here, as we had to make a forced march on the following day. Without the town an infinite number of tombs extended *across* the road. On asking our Koordish guide why the dead reposed in so public a spot? he replied nearly thus:—

“Mahommedans always like to select the roadside for a burial-place, in the hope that

the departed spirit may obtain pardon at the hands of the Prophet, from the prayers that you and I offer up in its behalf.”—“ But ” I rejoined, “ how can my prayers avail, since you hold me to be a Giaour ? ” To this he said, “ Al Ullah ! God is great, Mahommed is his prophet ! There is no objection ; it is a matter that rests between you and your God ; if your mother taught you an infidel creed, you are quite as safe as the Osmanlees themselves.”

We were quartered in the dwelling of a Turk, who kept a sort of *auberge*, or open house, for travellers, and who had been residing here for twenty years. Our host told us, that he once supplied the Baghdad government Tartars* with post-horses from this town to Kerkouk (Corcura, vel Demetrius) and Erbile (Arbella), but, finding it a losing speculation, he was obliged to give it up. He brought us a sheep, and requested Meerza Hoossain to put a price on it; but

* Turkish messengers in the service of the Ottoman Porte.

our Koord, without waiting to hear if a bargain was agreed on, seized the animal by force, stabbed it, and apportioned the carcass amongst our muleteers, who threw the joints into a pot of water, cooking them all in a few seconds.

The Turk, having caught a glimpse of the "naked face," as he termed it, of our servant-maid, asked me, if all the *Ingrèsse* women were as pretty? He said, it was forbidden by the Prophet for men to associate with them in the public manner I had been doing, according to the account of Meerza Hoos-sain. I could not help laughing heartily at this remark, and replied, that I had been favoured with a sight of many a "naked face" in Persia and Turkey, where several "lights of the Harem" had voluntarily shewn us their pretty countenances. "This" he rejoined, "was not of much consequence, as they all wore trowsers, and," added he, "those women who do *not* wear them, must be most im-modest creatures."

On quitting Kara-tuppah, our road still

lay in a southerly direction, and through an extensive plain, for about nine miles: we then crossed the river Naharwaun*, over a fine brick bridge of six arches, built by Ali Pasha many years ago, and suddenly entered a narrow pass of mouldering sandstone rock. Descending into the flat desert of Khâlis, we saw no more scattered hamlets, nor any straggling abodes of men. The country was one long sweeping plain, destitute of trees, indescribably silent, and stretching out beyond the reach of vision, leaving the mind exhausted in the endeavour to trace its boundless and lonesome extent. It, however, derives an interest from its immensity, possessing in some degree the solemn grandeur of the ocean. Gibbon thus describes this part of Assyria:—"The

* Nehrwan is situated at the distance of four farsang from Baghdad. A considerable stream flows there. Hence to the borders of Holwan is a desert, without any buildings or inhabited places between it and Samereh, or between Shehrzour and the borders of Tacrith. (Ebn Haukal.)

extensive region that lies between the river Tigris and the mountains of Media, was once filled with villages and towns; and the fertile soil, for the most part, was in a very improved state of cultivation. But, on the approach of the Romans, this rich and smiling prospect was instantly blasted. Wherever they moved, the inhabitants deserted the open villages and took shelter in the fortified towns; the cattle were driven away; the grass and ripe corn were consumed with fire; and, as soon as the flames had subsided which interrupted the march of Julian, he beheld the melancholy face of a smoking and naked desert *."

The mirage, with its beautiful phantasmagoria of landscape and figures, amused our march this day, and, amongst various other optical illusions, we saw a wide spreading lake, and, on its winding banks, an extensive city elevated in the midst of the beauty of earth and sky. Stately edifices rose before our eyes in

* Vide Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. Vol. ii. c. xxiv. p. 374.

all the pomp of their magnificence, and thousands of fantastically shaped towers pointed their alabaster peaks towards the clear ethereal canopy; these suddenly rent themselves into countless spires, as if they had been stricken by lightning, and as rapidly united again into their original shapes. In this desert all living objects appeared gigantic:—a party of Arabs, for instance, assumed, in the distance, the appearance of enormous height; their goats looked as large as camels, and their asses as tall as giraffes. As we approached them nearer and nearer the illusion diminished, and we at last found the magnitude of these objects degenerated into their natural proportions.

At five o'clock in the afternoon, we came to an encampment, where, to our surprise, we were refused even a drop of water to wet our parched lips. Indeed, the people appeared more inclined to rob us than to supply our wants. As my wife was on the point of fainting with exhaustion, in consequence of such long imprisonment in her kajavah, (the syce,

or groom, having broken the near side head of her saddle several days ago,) we were glad to heap our baggage around us in a circle, and to pass the night in the open air. We cared little for this, as, throughout our long journey, we took every thing rough and smooth as we found it.

Having seen the horses picqueted, I inquired for the tent of the chief of the encampment, and on my way passed many spare tents. Accosting a young shepherd boy, he told me the tribe called themselves "Ajameeah," a mongrel race of Persian robbers, utterly devoid of the hospitality of Arabs and the civility of villagers. On entering the largest tent, I indistinctly saw through a cloud of smoke, a fellow who was a dwarf in stature, reclining on a Persian carpet, using his chibouque in "full puff." At first this little *great* man declined to see me, but subsequently consented, though he sternly refused to allow me to sit down, although I left my boots outside his tent door. I civilly told him that I was an Englishman

travelling to Baghdad with my family, and hoped he would shelter us for the night. His chiboukjee, or pipe-bearer, whispered in his ear something about finding us lucrative guests, as we were always wandering in search of "old stones," in which we discovered gold; and, above all, added he, "they make a rule to pay just what you please for every thing supplied to them." After the little man had exhausted his displeasure on me for the intrusion, he thrust his chibouque in his mouth, and drew such a draught upon it that the flesh of his thin pale cheeks seemed to be so collapsed one within the other, I feared he never could succeed in unlocking them; but a long and lusty puff, which sent a volume of smoke rolling over my head, effected that purpose. Having thus relieved himself of all ill-humour by that "safety valve," his mouth, he asked me, if I wished to smoke? handing over at the same time his pipe and a tobacco bag containing some splendid samples of that Persian luxury. I accepted it, with many thanks. Although he now ap-

peared so well reconciled to our stay, he positively refused to give us a tent, but he ordered us some apps and eggs, for which, however, the exorbitant charge of five raej piastres was made, and a similar amount for a little rancid oil wherewith to fry them. We never before experienced such an inhospitable reception, having always received a cordial welcome even amongst the poorest tribes. Whilst we were supping *à la Perse*, we were rather chagrined at the coolness of the chief, who, after having finished his own supper, came over to us, and, with a friendly recognition, which might be termed "free and easy," commenced *sans ceremonie* attacking ours; to this, however, we would not submit. He then was inclined to be insolent, but slunk away, asserting as he went, that we did not believe in a prophet or a God.

We found that weariness does not always ensure sleep: the howling of the wind, the noise of dogs, the pertinacious curiosity of the idle, and the cries of immense troops of jackals, prevented our enjoying much sleep;

so, long before the day dawned, we resumed our journey, and soon reached the Delos, which at this point appeared nearly as broad as the Tigris at Mousul. We dismounted, and descended to the river to quench our raging thirst. Two of the muleteers, who had vainly endeavoured to persuade Meerza Hoossain to follow them, plunged in, and swam to the opposite bank. The stream was rapid and eddying, and much swollen by the melting of the snows in the upper country. Along the banks a beautifully rich turf spread out, widening or narrowing according to the nature of the ground. As we rode along, the Meerza observed a party of Arabs on the eastern side of the river, which made him very uneasy, being fearful, as all men are in this wild region, of sudden attack. It turned out, however, nothing more serious than one of the usual encounters. The courageous Meerza, who considered himself bound by no principle of action but that which is comprised in the duty of "taking care of yourself," was much relieved at dis-

covering their peaceable intentions. We exchanged with them the customary and courteous salutation, Unto you be peace! "Teyyub; all's well!" and continued our route.

Being always in advance of the baggage mules, we halted under every bush we could find, or, failing one, reclined beneath the shadow of the kajavahs, or our own horses. Some of the party were sure to produce a goat-skin bag with bread, or a few dates, which we shared until the arrival of the mules, when we mounted and rode onwards again. Although these temporary halts refreshed our horses, they fatigued *us* in no small degree, especially Mrs. Mignan, who found it no easy matter to escape from her prison-cage, there being no steps or other convenience by the aid of which she might descend. I used to kneel down and offer my back as her footstool, both on her alighting and ascending. The poor mules never rested, but jogged on the whole day, sometimes for ten or twelve hours together, according to the distance we were compelled to perform.

In this part of Assyria, we found the deception of distance far more remarkable than it is on the ocean. All distant objects appeared nearer to us by several miles than they really were; the extreme purity of the air gave to them that degree of brightness and distinctness, which, in the thicker atmosphere of our own country, is to be seen only in those that are near. I remember looking from a caravanserai whence houses in the vicinity of the next stage were clearly discernible: we guessed them at about four or five miles distant, when in reality they were nearer twelve. At the decayed, uninhabited village of Delli-Abbas, called by the Arabs, "Guntarah," we observed the walls of an imaum-zadah elevated, and the building itself turned *topsy-turvy*, by some atmospheric influence. Although the real distance was full twenty miles, it appeared only eight.

Leaving this old town, spread out in ruins upon the desert, we saw a stream at some distance, bordered by excellent pasture, on which flocks and herds were browsing.

Groups of tents, black from their covering of coarse felt, were sprinkled here and there, and we could perceive people moving to and fro amongst them, or reclining at the entrances of these simple habitations. Every thing announced that we had reached the end of our day's journey, and that we had arrived at the camp of a few wandering Illyautts*. The instant they saw us, they set up a joyful shout, and warmly congratulated us. Men, women, and children, scampered out to meet and greet us with loud exclamations of welcome. The difference between this reception and that of the previous evening, made a great impression upon our minds. Even old decrepid women came waddling out in their loose flowing frocks, to see the "new arrivals." The female costume of this tribe, consisted of a pair of cossack trowsers, a blue chemise, open from the neck as far as the breast, and reaching to the knees, and a cotton headkerchief. The muleteers busied themselves un-

* The Illyautts may be called the Gipsies of Persia; they resemble them both in form and feature.

loading their cattle and arranging our baggage. The loud tones of inquiry—the extreme curiosity of the women and their little black-eyed children—the quarrelling between the ill-tempered katurjees and our servants, mingled with the tinkling of their mules' bells and many other indescribable sounds, in one stupifying din, formed an odd, and somewhat interesting scene.

We agreed to quit this camp at three o'clock in the morning, to enable us to reach Howesh before the sun became too powerful. We therefore hastened to render ourselves comfortable for the night, and begged a good supper. Nothing could exceed the extreme simplicity of the construction of this encampment. Three upright sticks driven into the ground, with another crossing their tops, formed the framework of each tent, whilst a large brown or black camel hair cloth, woven by the women, served as a covering for them. When taking a few notes, I saw an old Illyautt woman churning butter by swinging a goat's skin backwards and forwards,

after the manner already described. Our repast was extremely good. The large, round, muffin-like cakes sent to us, were light and wholesome, though not *quite* so white as they might have been.

I thanked these poor but happy people, for their kind treatment, and they prayed "Ullah" to protect and grant us many happy years. I gave the chief of the camp a clasped knife and some other trifling articles, and my lady likewise presented the women with several coral beads, which perfectly enchanted them. Whatever our vaunted civilization may have made us who, in England, boast of not knowing our next door neighbour, we are wretchedly behind all Oriental nations in acts of disinterested hospitality; and, for the genuine seeds of friendship, I know not what soil equals that of the uncultivated mind: no tares of selfishness there spring up to choke the growth of that sweet plant: the simple virtue of the tented Illyautt shines pre-eminent!

A very intelligent Persian nobleman thus

describes his entertainment by the Illyautt women :—" When I reached Koordistaun, I solicited the hospitality of the tented Illyautt, and received the greatest attention. The ladies, according to the custom of the country, were entirely unveiled. The daughter of my host was about fifteen years of age, and extremely beautiful. When I said I was thirsty, she ran to a rill, and brought me a cup of pure water. It was a draught from the fountain of life, brought by a peri; but, instead of extinguishing, it increased the flame which her dark languishing eyes had kindled in my breast. On bidding adieu to the encampment," he adds, "a vain and uninformed coxcomb might have mistaken the manner of my fair cup-bearer; but I had experience of these Illyautt damsels, and well knew that nothing was meant but that kindness and hospitality with which they treat all strangers who visit their tents. I believe them virtuous beyond all other women in Persia; and the man who should even attempt seduction, would be immediately sacri-

ficed to the implacable honour of their male relations."

We rose at dawn on the following morning. The little twinkling eyes of the cross old muleteer, who was always anxious to get soon into motion, detected the "Soo-bah Kauzib," or the *lying dawn*, as he called it—

" That earlier dawn
Whose glimpses are again withdrawn,
As if the Morn had waked, and then
Shut close her lids of light again."

This is an optical deception arising from the refraction of the sun's rays, even when it is below the visible horizon. It is very common in these parts. As we rode along, this flushed appearance vanished altogether; darkness ensued, but soon a brighter light flashed from the horizon to the zenith, and objects became distinctly visible. Major Scott Waring says, "the Persians account for this phenomenon in the most whimsical manner. They declare that as the sun rises from behind Mount Caucasus, it passes a hole

perforated through that mountain, and that, darting its rays through it, it is the cause of the *false* dawn, or this temporary appearance of daybreak. As it ascends, the earth is again veiled in darkness, until the sun rises above the mountain, and brings with it the *real* morning."

It is quite surprising to witness the power and speed of the Persian mules. There were two amongst our number that carried four bales of cloth, each bale weighing one hundred and fifty pounds. Many of them will fetch a sum equivalent to thirty guineas, in any part of the Persian empire. These were the property of a wealthy Armenian merchant named Gaspar Khan, for whom I advanced a sum of money at Soolimaniah, or they would there have been seized. I never saw a farthing of my money again, although I remained several months at Baghdad, and repeatedly applied (but in vain) to the British resident in that city for redress, as this fat and pursy Armenian was trading under his auspices.

The country continued level, and the soil of a diluvial nature, intersected by ravines and water-courses. No signs of habitation could be traced, though numbers of the red-legged partridge were rising from every patch of brushwood. We made no halt, but travelled onwards as fast as possible, in hopes of reaching the village by noon. At nine o'clock, we came to a narrow valley, through which ran a small stream of water. Our wearied animals had suffered so greatly from the countless dry canal beds over which we had travelled this morning, that the old muleteer, ever ready to sympathise with the stomachs of his mules, declared, he would not advance an inch further until he had refreshed them. So, yielding to his wishes, we were obliged to sound the halt. On resuming our wearisome march, we, at length, came up with large walled enclosures, and patches of rich verdure, cut into plots by numerous water-courses, and browsed over by horses, cows, sheep, and goats.

A little after twelve, we rode into Howesh,

and secured quarters in a spacious walled court-yard, from which we were enabled to exclude the curious, by closing its gates. The village stood upon the banks of the Tigris, amidst a thick date tree grove. The feathery-looking palm was here extremely beautiful, growing to a very considerable height. The desert had disappeared, and all around were green and fragrant trees. The zabib of the town farmed the gardens from a Georgian *protégé* of the pasha of Baghdad. He sent us a present of fruit, and a spirit distilled from the date tree, which was but little inferior to our own cordials. The dexterity of the Arab fellah, in climbing to pluck the date, equalled that of the Hindoo who ascends the cocoa-nut tree. They both adopt the same mode of ascent, clinging like monkeys to the stem, and assisting themselves up by a thick thong of hide thrown around the tree*.

* Dafard el Hadad thus describes the leaf-crowned date tree. "The superb date tree, whose head languidly reclines, like that of a handsome woman over-

I knew an old Arab woman at Bassorah who had made a voyage to Bombay. When she returned to Arabia, she was describing the beauties of that island, "but," added she, "there are no date groves, and the people are obliged to wait for the arrival of our baghalahs*, before a single date is to be found in the bazaar." Her hearers held up their hands, exclaiming, "Ullah! Ullah! how we pity those Indians, who are condemned to live in a country that does not produce dates!"

We could procure no fuel here for culinary purposes, but were obliged to use small round cakes of cow-dung. The whole process of cookery in all the village harems in Persia, and along the banks of the Euphrates, and Tigris, is performed by the agency of these

come with sleep." And in the poem of Amriolkais occurs this passage:—"Her long, coal-black hair decorated her back, thick and diffused, like bunches of dates clustering on the palm tree."

* Arab vessels, varying in size from fifty to one hundred and fifty tons and upwards.

cakes, which impart no disagreeable taste or smell whatever to the viands. They are also used in all the manufactories of metal and of earthen vessels. They throw out a most powerful heat, and emit little or no flame. The disagreeable fabrication of them belongs exclusively to the fair sex. The wife of the richest Turkish zâbit may be seen employing her little white hands in mixing them with chopped straw, and strewing them out in the harem court to dry in the sun.

At six o'clock on the morning of the 24th of April, we quitted Howesh, and soon reached the margin of the Tigris, on which we saw several "kelleks," or leathern-bottomed rafts of Assyria, floating down with the stream towards the capital of the Arabian kaliphs, piled to an immense height with firewood, pottery, and merchandise of every description. The method of navigating this river with vessels so peculiarly constructed as the *πλοῖα σκύτινα*, or "navigia coriacea" of the ancient, and the

“ kellek ” of the modern, Babylonians, remains unaltered to this very day. The substratum is composed of inflated sheepskin bags, supporting a number of poplar spars tied firmly together. The boat is managed as described by Herodotus, and, on the boatmen reaching Baghdad, they break up their vessel, dispose of its spars, and return to Mosoul and other towns with their empty skins, to serve in supporting another load of spars and goods. Besides this raft, we saw two other kinds of boats—one long, sharp, and narrow, and the second high, and crescent-shaped, both rudely formed with wooden ribs and planks thickly coated with bitumen. In the creeks a round ribbed boat, or coracle, was used, which the natives call a “ kooffah,” and which I have illustrated in my work on Babylonia. This is also covered with bitumen, and composed either of thin willow rods, or the mid-rib of the frond of the date tree.

Beloe, in his translation of Herodotus (Clio. cap. 194), says, “ Of all that I saw

in this country, next to Babylon itself, what to me appeared the greatest curiosity, were the boats. These, which are used by those who come to the city, are of a circular form, and made of skins. They are constructed in Armenia, in the parts above Assyria, where the sides of the vessels, being formed of willow, are covered externally with skins, and, having no distinction of head or stern, are modelled into the shape of a shield. Lining the bottoms of these boats with reeds, they take on board their merchandise, and thus commit themselves to the stream. The principal article of their commerce is palm wine, which they carry in casks. The boats have two oars, one man to each; one pulls to him, the other pushes from him. These boats are of very different dimensions; some of them are so large as to bear freights to the value of five thousand talents: the smaller of them has one ass on board; the larger, several. On their arrival at Babylon, they dispose of all their cargo, selling the ribs of the boats, the matting, and every

thing but the skins which cover them; these they lay upon their asses, and with them return to Armenia. The rapidity of the stream is too great to render their return by water practicable. This is, perhaps, the reason which induces them to make their boats of skin rather than of wood. On their return with their asses to Armenia they make other vessels, in the manner we have before described*.”

* Beloe's version of this passage is incorrect, and, as the text of Herodotus is so critically exact, it is but justice to the father of history, to clear it of the unintentional misinterpretation of his translators and their followers in this essential passage; and to prove more fully and clearly that he had seen what he so exactly depicts.

It appears, that the force of his description and the error of his translators are to be found here; *νομέας ἱτέης ταμόμενοι ποιήσονται, περιτείνουσι τούτοις διαφθέρας στεγαστρίδας ἔξωθεν, ἐδάφεος τρόπον*, whereby the historian seems to describe most correctly what is done at the present day. It may be thus rendered: “Having felled willow spars, they put them in order, and extended around them, outwardly, leathern bags (involucra vel segestria coriacea) as a substratum, or pavement.” This giving a pavement, or substratum

These kelleks were also used in the time of the younger Cyrus. Xenophon says, "In their march through the desert, they discovered a large, and populous city, called Carmande, where the soldiers bought provisions, having passed over to it upon rafts, by filling the skins, which they made use of for tents, with dry hay, and sewing them

of skins to a raft of willow spars tied tight together, has been misinterpreted willow ribs, covered with a coating of skins. At present, the trunk of the wild poplar is used, which is supported upon inflated bags of sheepskin, flayed with peculiar art. Differing as the explanation of this passage of Herodotus, as here given, does from the description of two modern scholars, celebrated for their knowledge of the dialect of their ancient original, it is, perhaps, necessary that the ground of difference or dissent should be explored. The authorities here relied upon, are the present method of construction of the vessel presumed to be alluded to by Herodotus, and the facility with which the interpretation herein adopted, may be derived from the meanings applicable to the words of the text. Had not the word "*νομέας*" once occurred in the chapter whence it was quoted, in a sense adverse to such a signification, it might have been interpreted "campestris," and "agrestis," as attributive of "*ιρέης*" the willow; but it

together so close that the water could not get therein."

Spelman observes, in a note on this passage of Xenophon, that anciently, rafts of the kind here spoken of, were much used in passing rivers; and adds, "that Alexander passed several rivers in this manner, particularly the Oxus, in his victorious march through Asia." (Anabasis, b. i. p. 60).

has been translated by "ribs," and "costæ," derivable, I suppose, from "divido," one acceptance of "*νέμω*" the root, while ours would have flowed from "pasco," the other signification of the same. The term "*στεγαστρίδας*" is rendered by the word "bags," because "*segestrium*," or "*segestre*," its Latin equivalents, express something not remotely dissimilar to the term here used:—they mean ticken or linen, or leathern sack, which contains the stuffing of a mattress or quilt particularly, as well as these last generally; they also signify the wrappers in which various goods are contained, or with which they are enveloped. Now, the leathern bags, or sacks, on which the spars of the raft rest, are precisely the same as those in which goods of various kinds are preserved by the Arabs of Mesopotamia to this very day.

In the passage of the Tigris by the ten thousand Greeks, a Rhodian offered to convey the troops across that river, in the following manner : “ I shall want,” said he, “ two thousand leather bags. I see here great numbers of sheep, goats, oxen, and asses ; if these are flayed, and their skins blown, we may easily pass the river with them. I shall also want the girths belonging to the sumpter-horses ; with these I will fasten the bags to one another, and, hanging stones to them, let them down into the water instead of anchors, then tie up the bags at both ends, and, when they are upon the water, lay fascines upon them, and cover them with earth. I will make you presently sensible that you cannot sink ; for every bag will bear up two men, and the fascines and the earth will prevent them from slipping.”

At eight o'clock, we stopped at a caravanserai and received some water, for which the Arabs demanded money. About ten, we passed the remains of the lines thrown up by Nadir Shah, in the year A. D. 1735,

when the Persians besieged Baghdad*. The view that presented itself to us on passing these mounds was very fine. The great capital, where once was seated the throne of the Arabian kaliphs, lay apparently in the centre of a vast plain, from which arose many a lofty minaret and stately mosque. To the right of the city, there suddenly appeared a luxuriant grove of date trees, from the centre of which the golden cupola of Kauzumeen, majestically glittering in the sun, was seen far above its feathering head. To the north, the plain was unbounded; and towards the east, a visionary lake, with its thin vapours floating over the city like sheets of transparent silver, reflected every surrounding object as in a mirror. At one o'clock, the celebrated city of Baghdad rose in sight with its towering citadel. The lovely groves of palms, beneath whose shade the

* When Tamerlane reduced Baghdad, he erected on its ruins a pyramid of ninety thousand heads. (Gibbon, chap. 65, vol. 6, p. 322).

Tigris was flowing, had for the last hour completely obscured that river; but now it was only partially hidden, until we crossed a dry ditch surrounding the city, and entered its lofty arched gateway, which was carved and enamelled in the arabesque manner.

CHAPTER III.

Baghdad—Daoud Pasha—Jew Brokers—Origin of Baghdad—Climate and Soil—Ladies of Baghdad—Persian Beauty—Eastern Head-dress—Jewellery—Chaders—Polygamy—Flight from the Plague—Arabian Cemetery—Irrigation—Rafts—Royal Canal—Ctesiphon—Palace of Kesra—Destruction of Ctesiphon.

ALTHOUGH the splendid palaces of Haroun al Raschid * and his beautiful Zobeïde belong to poetry, and exist only in the stories of the Thousand and One Nights, the surrounding country is indelibly marked with an imperishable interest, and forms a powerful contrast to the desolation in which the destroying influence of time has overwhelmed this seat of the ancient kaliphs. When viewed with reference to the events of the earliest history of the world, it is indeed a region of undying attraction both to the soldier and

* The ally of Charlemagne, the dread of the Romans, and the hero of the Arabian Nights' Entertainments.

to the antiquary. Like all other once brilliant cities in this devoted country, Baghdad has fallen from its ancient splendour, and suffered from the most dreadful visitations. At this day vast masses of ruin entirely impede the passage of most of the streets, and an aspect of misery hangs over this favourite scene of eastern romance. It is difficult to judge of its present population, as, from the disturbed state of the country, and the constant demand for troops by the pasha, it must greatly fluctuate: added to which, the majority of the inhabitants are either soldiers, or employed by the government, and always stimulated by the hope of plunder to engage in any quarrel. The present population may, however, be stated at eighty thousand as a maximum.

If we except Egypt, the pashalic of Baghdad is the most powerful and extensive throughout the wide range of the Ottoman empire, and Daoud Pasha resembles an independent sovereign rather than a sultan's representative. Like the

great Mahommed Ali of Egypt, he is determined to support a standing army, clothed and disciplined *à la Franque*; and has actually placed several hundred of his household troops under the immediate command of Mr. Littlejohn, who holds the rank of *bimbashee** in his service. He has even established a military arsenal within his citadel, and appointed a French officer (Monsieur de Marqué) its director. He casts cannon, and makes gunpowder—erects mosques, minarets, baths, and bazaars—and, with all his faults, has done more within the last ten years for the capital of the Arabian Irak, than any of his predecessors since the days of Haroun al Raschid.

Although very reluctant to acknowledge himself the slave of the “Vicar of the Prophet,” he is too knowing not to remember that *les rois ont les bras longs*. He therefore makes the best of it, and sends to Constantinople a very considerable annual tri-

* A Turkish colonel.

bute in specie*. The yearly confirmation, also, although a mere formal act, greatly increases his expenses, for to meet this demand he is obliged, through his shroffs or bankers resident at the Sublime Porte, to lodge other sums in the imperial coffers, which sums are invariably extorted from the Armenian and Jewish merchants on a *promise* of repayment. The duties derivable from the “goomruck,” or custom and excise departments, together with the capitation tax from his Giaour friends, are secured with great avidity, lest a card of invitation to spend a day in the capital of the empire may unexpectedly arrive, which it would be the height of *impolitesse* not to accept. Hence, his cupidity and speculation. Then, again, the support of his “life guards” to repel the sudden riots of the Bedouins, who defy his authority† and plunder all the

* All pashas are obliged to plead poverty—to be a wealthy man in Turkey is tantamount to being covered with crime; it is the passport to decapitation.

† The most peaceful Bedouins even exact tribute from all the Turkish merchants, whenever their cara-

merchandise they meet, sometimes beneath the very walls of the city, is another great "drag" upon his purse.

The Jew brokers of Baghdad have a most comfortable creed; it entirely excludes the workings of that antiquated inconvenience called conscience. They are decidedly the greatest capitalists in the city, and are in immediate communication with the Arabs, who can afford to retail their booty at a "frightful sacrifice." A merchant has often an opportunity of purchasing his own long-cloths, silks, or shawls, as he passes along the bazaar, without having the satisfaction of "taking up" the receiver or the vendor of his goods, or, in fact, of obtaining the least redress. It is superfluous to add, that certain ruin must inevitably attend the Asiatic merchant, should he not be under the protection of the British authorities. The French *corps diplomatique* are mere ciphers here, possessing vans pass through their encampments. If ever the tribute money is withheld, the goods are seized.

little or no influence whatever with the pasha*.

Hamdallah Mustoufi, in his valuable geographical treatise, entitled *Nozhat ul Qulub*, gives the following account of this celebrated city. "Baghdad is the metropolis of the Arabian Irak, and a city of Islam, situated on the Dighlah (Tigris). In the age of the Kesras, there was on this site, on the western side, a village named Kerkh, founded by Shapoor Dhul Aktaf; and on the eastern bank the small town of Sabat, a dependency of Nahrawan.

"The kesra Anushirwan laid out ten parks and gardens in the open country in the vicinity, and called them Baghdad. By the Arabs it is called Kubbut ul Islâm. Al-

* The sultan has recently created two councils of state, and Daoud Pasha has been named president of the lower council, which is to meet at Constantinople. The object of the sultan in introducing this innovation in the administration, appears to be the securing a better control over the acts of his ministers than he has hitherto possessed.

mansoor Billah, the second Abbasside khaliph*, surnamed Abu Dewanik, founded the city in the year of the Hegira, 145; building chiefly on the western shore. His son, Mahdi Billah, fixed his seat on the eastern side of the river, and added considerably to the mass of edifices, which, in the reign of his successor, Haroun al Raschid, were increased to the extent of an area of four farsakhs by one and a half. His heir, Mootaim Billah, removed the capital to Samirah, to free the inhabitants from the violence of his Mamelukes.

“ His example was followed by seven of his successors, until, in the reign of Mootadhid Billah, the sixteenth Abbasside khalif, the seat of government was transferred to Baghdad, where all his successors have retained it. Mooktafi Billah, the son of the preceding,

* The Abbassides were the descendants of Abbas, the uncle of Mahommed. Almanzoor patronised astronomy, and was a great encourager of the arts and sciences. This city was their imperial seat for five hundred years.

founded the jamah on the eastern shore; and Moostadhir Billah surrounded it with a ditch, and wall of lime and kiln-bricks; the portion of which to the east, named Hara-mein, was eighteen thousand kams long, and had four gates:—the Khorasan, the Khilif, the Hatabiyah, and the Sook ul Sool-taun.

“The western, or quarter of Kerkh, is guarded by a wall of twelve thousand kams; and most of the edifices of the city are of lime and burnt bricks.”

The author describes the air as good to strangers or natives; the inhabitants, and, particularly, the women, as fat, ruddy, and devoted to gaiety; cattle as thriving, but some kinds scarce; the pasturage excellent; the grain abundant, and highly nutritive; the soil rich and productive, rather more favourable for plants of warm than cold climates. He particularly alludes to the lofty stature which the *Tamarix orientalis* and the *Ricinus communis* usually attain in the genial soil of this country. Shrines, and tombs of holy

men, are abundant both in the city and in its immediate and more remote vicinity, but too numerous to be noticed in this place.

The ladies of Baghdad appeared to us to enjoy the same liberty of action as those of Tabriz; and were equally desirous of shewing their beauty. When they ride through the streets, they wrap themselves up in large silken chaders of various gaudy colours, and obscure their pretty faces with thin horse-hair veils, which fasten to the temples by two silver clasps. They also wear the yellow *hessian* boot, the slipper, and the trowser, of course. The veil should never be raised in the public street; though, how often are the laws of decorum transgressed, especially when they exchange *doux yeux* with the Franks. They consider their dress a very disagreeable one as compared to the costume of European ladies, and have long since voted a change, which, however, the Turks will not permit. It certainly must be a most uncomfortable garb for practising "equitation," especially when we remember

that all these ladies ride not only *en cavalier*, but *à la planchette*.

Of all the women I have seen in this and other large Asiatic cities, the Persian are, in my opinion, the prettiest: and, although travellers extol the beauty of the Circassian ladies, I can affirm they do not approach the Persian, with whom every thing is the work of nature. A fine head of hair, which often reaches nearly to the ground, is the first care; the next point is the mouth—a woman to be thought pretty, *must* have “her mouth smaller than her eyes.” This is a proverbial expression, and if not quite correct, is not far from it. With all their good looks, however, the face is rather too round; but in Persia this is greatly admired, for the Persians always compare a pretty face to the “full moon*.” They do not paint, like many English ladies of my acquaintance, though they use a little soap to the

* To be admired by the Persians, a woman *must* have the eyes of a gazelle, the waist of a cypress-tree, and a face like the *full moon*.

cheeks, which is quite dry and innocuous in its effects, and which imparts a brilliant colour. I wonder they do not sell this "sapon sans pareille" in London, for I am persuaded that Truefitt, Ross, or any other *artiste en cheveux*, would speedily make a fortune by the dowagers in Eaton and Belgrave squares *alone*.

In the harems of many of the government officers here, there are both Georgian and Circassian ladies, as well as Turkish and Persian. As they have no opportunity of seeing the *Journal des Modes*, or the "World of Fashion," they can take no hints on the important subject of female costume. Their head-dress is, however, very becoming. It consists of a Cashmere shawl turban, wound up in as elegant a manner as Madame Devey could arrange it, and ornamented with pearls, rubies, sapphires, and other precious stones.

The hair is plaited into several small tresses, some creeping through the folds of the turban, whilst others, *mignonnement engantelé*,

recline upon the bosom*. The rage for jewellery is such, that the wife of every poor artisan possesses some few amethysts and turquoise, or woe betide the unfortunate husband!

Osmanlee ladies of rank have a fortune in jewels alone, besides many sets of valuable ornaments, such as gold bracelets, necklaces, clasps, studs, and buttons—a sight of which would drive Rundell and Bridge mad with envy.

Embroidery is brought to great perfection by the ladies of the harems, and all articles of dress from Baghdad are highly prized throughout Turkish Arabia. The northern part of the town, which surrounds the palace of the pasha, is inhabited solely by Turks, who, from extreme jealousy about their women, prevent all Franks residing in that quarter, which is appropriated to themselves alone.

* In combing the hair, it was customary to sprinkle it with perfumes, and to dispose it in a variety of becoming forms. Richardson's Dissertation, p. 481.

Each trade has its separate bazaar; the market is most abundantly supplied, and is inferior to none throughout all Asia.

The poorer orders of females bustle about the city in common blue checked calico chaders, which they fold up above the hips, bringing a part before the face with the left hand, so as to leave only one eye uncovered; which, however, performs its duty for the other in a most efficient manner. They wear no veils; and when you meet them, the ugly ones cover themselves up, and make such a fuss about it, that they take especial care *their* faces shall not be seen, whilst the good-looking females pretend to be caught unawares, and the very way they contrive to trifle with their chaders, under the pretence of adjusting them, always displays their features to advantage.

The harems of the Baghdadees are separated from the house by an oblong courtyard, and are surrounded by a high brick wall, through which are bored small

round eyelet-holes, to enable the women to overlook their neighbours' harems; for

“ Sometimes they contain a deal of fun.”

Harems are not the prison-cages we fancy, but are often very extensive, and always beautifully arranged. Like all Orientals, the proprietors of them marry as many ladies as will accept them, in spite of all the precepts of the Koran.

An article on the Ottoman empire appeared in the *Edinburgh Review* for the month of January, 1830. In that number, containing a review of Mr. Madden's *Travels in Turkey and Egypt*, the following passage occurs in reference to polygamy and harems. “ We have been assured by a Persian gentleman, that, out of an extensive acquaintance, consisting of several hundred persons, he did not know in Persia ten who availed themselves of this corrupting and disastrous privilege.” Now, I can assert, from a residence of many years in Turkish Arabia, and from several visits made

into Persia, that I neither knew, nor heard of one single Mussulman in those countries, who did not draw on the Prophet for his full allowance of *four* wives, independently of slaves at discretion. It seems rather strange that the learned reviewer should have permitted himself to be so *gulled* by this "Persian gentleman:" had he only concurred with Mr. Madden's views of polygamy and harems, he would have been *critically* accurate.

After a long detention at Baghdad, we made arrangements to pass to the southward. The plague, with a rapid, steady, and fatal march, was consuming thousands of our fellow-beings, which was a sufficient warning for ourselves. With this "notice to quit" constantly before our eyes, we embarked for the shores of the Persian Gulf, on a long, narrow, flat-bottomed vessel, so crowded with passengers that there was scarcely space enough for each to lie down: Mahomedan, Jewish, and Christian families were all huddled together like so many sheep in

an Indiaman's long-boat—all flying from the plague, and from the despotic acts of the pashas of Merdin, Mosoul, and Baghdad. They subsisted entirely on fried locusts.

Dropping down to Gurarah, we had a fine view of the cemetery of the Arabian kaliphate, in which so many Osmanlees were being daily deposited. Here were some superb tombs, near whose sacred walls the tall and dusky tamarisk waved its mourning branches. We parted at this spot from many a kind friend, who wished us a safe passage to India, and a speedy return to a city so celebrated for the nocturnal rambles of the Kaliph Haroun, and his old white-bearded Vizier Giaffer Barmeki.

Pursuing our voyage down the Tigris, towards Seleucia and Ctesiphon*, we were

* The celebrated city of Seleucia, whose ruins attest its former greatness, was founded and built by Seleucus Nicator, king of Assyria, one of the successors of Alexander the Great, in the year before Christ, 293. In the first century of the Christian era, it contained six

much annoyed by the ceaseless grinding of an immense number of rudely built water-wheels, such as I had formerly seen on the banks of the Euphrates, and still more recently on the Nile at Cairo, where, in a deep recess of brickwork, the water is raised by wheels, and small earthen jars. In some places large bags of hide were substituted for these jars, and the whole was worked by a couple of horses or buffaloes. The same mode of irrigation is carried on in Western India to this day.

Herodotus thus alludes to this mode of irrigation: "The Assyrians have but little

hundred thousand inhabitants. The Parthian kings transferred the seat of empire to Ctesiphon, on the opposite bank of the Tigris, where they resided in winter, and that city, formerly a village, became great and powerful. (See Pliny, lib. v. c. 26, and Strabo, lib. xvi. p. 743). Ctesiphon was thrice besieged, and thrice taken by the predecessors of Julian: and, when attacked by Julian, the anger of that emperor, and of his army, was not moderated, nor their cruelty abated, by the effectual resistance of the citizens of Ctesiphon against sixty thousand besiegers. (Gibbon, Vol. i. c. viii. p. 212).

rain; the lands, however, are fertilised, and the fruits of the earth nourished by means of the river. This does not, like the Egyptian Nile, enrich the country by overflowing its banks, but is dispersed by manual labour, or by hydraulic engines." (Clio. cxc. iii.) Both the Euphrates and Tigris occasionally overflow their banks, but the inundation does not leave behind it any thick deposit of mud.

We noticed several Arabs crossing the stream on little fragile rafts, only just capable of containing the weight of a single person, without the least protection from the water, in which it was completely immersed. These rafts were steered along the stream by a small paddle, alternately shifted from side to side, like those used by the Esquimaux, as represented in the splendid engravings attached to Sir John Franklin's Journeys towards the North Pole.

Shortly after day-break, on the 15th of July, we passed the Nahar-Malcha, or "the

King's River*,” which tradition has pointed out as the work of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon†: we also descried the ruined

* This royal canal runs close to an old site called “Coche”—“in confluente Euphratis, fossa perducta atque Tigris,” says Pliny. It bears the name of Nahar Malcha, “quod significat fluvius regum.” The emperors Trajan and Severus cleansed this canal for the passage of their fleets to the Tigris. Ammianus Marcellinus, lib. xxiv. cap. 6, says, Id, (viz. “flumen regium,” which he also calls “fossile flumen”), antehac Trajanus, posteaque Severus, egesto solo, fodiri in modum canalis amplissimi studio curaverat summo, ut aquis illuc ab Euphrate transfusus, naves ad Tigridem commigrarent.

The Babylonian district, like Egypt, is intersected by a number of canals (Herodotus, Clio. cxc. iii). Gibbon also says, the uses of these artificial canals were various and important: they served to discharge the superfluous waters from one river into the other, at the season of their respective inundations; subdividing themselves into smaller and smaller branches, they refreshed the dry lands, and supplied the deficiency of rain. They facilitated the intercourse of peace and commerce; and as the dams could be speedily broken down, they armed the despair of the Assyrians with the means of opposing a sudden deluge to the progress of an invading army.

† “Nabocadnassar.—Les Arabes appellent ainsi

palace of Kesra, resting in silent majesty on the site of Ctesiphon, or Madâyen, as it is called by the Bedouins.

Hamdallah Mustoufi* says, that Madâyen is the work of Tahmurath Divband, of the Pishduđi dynasty of Persian kings, who named it Gardabad. Jumshîd completed it, and called it Teisèboon. It is the largest of the seven chief cities of Irâk, and was thence called Madâyen. Its six rivals are Kadesiah, Rûmiah, Hirah, Bâbil, Hulwaun, and Nahrawaun; all of which are now in ruins. Jumshîd built a stone bridge over the Dighlah (Tigris), which excited the admiration of Alexander; but the succeeding

celui que nous appellons vulgairement Nabuchodonosor. Ce mot Arabe est assez conformé au nom que les Hebreux lui donnent. Les mêmes Arabes appellent plus ordinairement ce prince, qui étoit roi des Assyriens et des Babyloniens, Bokht, ou Bakht al Nassar, nom qui est aussi le plus en usage chez les Persans et chez les Turcs. Les historiens Orientaux, et principalement les Persiens, donnent aussi à ce prince les noms de Raham et de Gudarz." (D'Herbelôt, tom. iii. p. 1.)

* Nozhat al Qûlûb.

Persian race of kings destroyed this noble specimen of art*.

Ardashir Babigan, who improved the city and made it his capital, was desirous of restoring the bridge, but without effect; he consequently formed one of chains. The succeeding Kesras retained this city as their capital, which Shapoor Dhu'l Aktaf embellished,

* Abulfaraz relates, that Alexander of Macedon was the son of Olympia, the consort of Philip, by Nectanele, king of Egypt; who, having been expelled from his throne by Artaxerxes Ochus, fled in the disguise of an astrologer, and took refuge in Macedonia. Nizami declares him to have been the son of Filikus, whose sway extended over the regions of Room and Roos, and whose residence was in Macedon and Yunan. He does not mention the name of his mother, but describes her as a lady of Philip's court, of surpassing beauty and majestic stature. Abulfaraz fixes the duration of Alexander's reign at twelve years—the author of the *Tarikhi*, Jewán-ará, at fourteen. The first nearly agrees with the calculation of Petavius, according to whom, Alexander

Was born	356 A. C.	Archon Elpines.
Philip died	336 A. C.	Archon Pythodorus.
11th year of Alexander	326 A. C.	Archon Anticles.
Alexander died July 29th	324 A. C.	Archon Hegesias.

He was the last of the 2nd, or Kaianian, dynasty of Persia.

and wherein Nushirwân erected the palace of Kesra, built of burnt bricks and lime ; and to this time not a brick has been removed.

D'Herbelôt says, " Nos géographes modernes prétendent que cette ville est l'ancienne Ctesiphon ; mais les historiens Persiens veulent, que Schabur, ou Sapor, surnommé Dhoulaktaff, c. a. aux épaules, l'ait fondé sous le nom de Madain, et que Khosroës, surnommé Nuschiruan, l'ait augmentée notablement, et embellie d'un superbe palais qui a passé pour l'ouvrage le plus magnifique de tout l'Orient. Ce palais, que les Orientaux appellent Thak Kesra, en Arabe, ou Thak Khosru, en Persien, c. a. La voute, ou le dome de Khosroës, fut pillé avec la ville, l'an 16 de l'Hégire, par Sâad, général du khalife Omar, après qu'il eut remporté la victoire sur les Persans dans la fameuse journée de Cadesie*."

The area of the building was a square of one hundred and fifty gaz ; its principal hall was forty-two gaz in extent, eighty-two

* D'Herbelôt, p. 525.

long, and sixty-five high. Encircling it were smaller buildings and apartments worthy of the principal structure*.

Abu Dawanik, the khalifah, was desirous of removing the materials of this city for the use of his projected capital at Baghdad; Sooleiman ebn Khalid, his wazir, dissuaded him from this, saying, that he would be reproached by mankind, for the destruction of one city to aid in the foundation of another, as betraying a want of resources.

The monarch reprobated his minister's

* This magnificent monument of antiquity is to this hour in a wonderful state of preservation. It presents a front of three hundred feet, which is adorned with a quadruple row of arched recesses, with a central arch making a span of eighty-six feet, and rising to the height of one hundred and three feet. Walls of the thickness of sixteen feet support it, and lead to a hall, which extends to the depth of one hundred and fifty-six feet east and west. There were said to be under this palace of Chosroës a hundred vaults, filled with treasures so immense that some Mahomedan writers tell us, their Prophet, to encourage his disciples, carried them to a rock which, at his command, opened, and gave them a prospect through it of the treasures of Kesra. (See the Universal History.)

lurking tenderness for the fame of the Kesra; and, commencing the work of destruction, soon found that the expense attendant on the disjunction and removal of the materials of the city would far exceed the cost of new preparations. He was now anxious to desist; but was reminded by the wazir, that having commenced, he should persevere, or he would be exposed to the imputation of being less powerful than the founders of the city. Sooleiman advised however, at the same time, that the arch should remain untouched, as a lasting evidence to mankind of the prophetic character of Mahommed, on the night of whose birth it was miraculously rent. Madâyen is now in ruins*.

* In the second century of the Christian era, the Romans penetrated as far as Madâyen. Gibbon says, "The sack and conflagration of Seleucia, with the massacre of three hundred thousand of the inhabitants, tarnished the glory of the Roman triumph." That city sunk under the fatal blow; but Ctesiphon recovered its strength to maintain a siege against the Emperor Severus, and to resist sixty thousand besiegers under Julian. (Gibbon, Vol. i. chap. viii. p. 212.)

CHAPTER IV.

Leave Ctesiphon—Selman's Tomb—Fleet of Boats—"Keep off"
 —Female Water-carriers—The River Hye—Koot al Hye—
 Ride over the Desert—Life in the Desert—Waasut—Antique
 Gem—Night in the Desert—Bedouin Camp—Sultry Atmo-
 sphere—Mahomedan Ablution—Custom House—The Eu-
 phrates—Sooksheook—Buffaloes—Extensive Camps—Arab
 Women—Land of Eden—Euphrates and Tigris—Canals and
 Marshes—Islands of Susiana—Rush Rafts—Tower of Dair—
 City of Omar—Arabesque Minaret.

As the breeze was fresh and fair, we soon passed Ctesiphon's mouldering walls, which are still to be seen upon the river's bank in all the silent gloom of utter desolation. On the western side, Seleucia is one confused heap of ruin; and on the eastern, stands the tomb of Selman the Persian*:—

* "Abou Abdalla Selman al Farsi, appelé aussi Selman Al Khair. C'est le nom d'un affranchi de Mahomet, qui étoit Persien de nation. L'on dit qu'il étoit Chrétien, et qu'il avoit lû les livres saints et voyagé beaucoup. Cependant, il fût des premiers et des plus considerables entre les Musulmans; ensuite que quelques-uns disent

Nearly opposite Selman's tomb a bend in the river occurs, which obliged us to make a circuit of several miles, although the neck of land was not more than a quarter of a

de luy que bana aleslam, c'est à dire, que c'est luy qui bâti le Musulmanisme.

“ Il y a dans la vie de Mahomet, que dans la journée du Khandak, c'est à dire, du fossé ou de la tranchée, Mahomet ayant assigné quarante brasses de terrain à creuser pour chaque dizaine d'hommes, chacun vouloit avoir Selman de son côté, à cause de sa vigueur; et les fugitifs de la Mecque d'un côté, et les auxiliaires de Medine de l'autre, étant divisez sur son sujet, Mahomet prononca ces paroles: ‘Selman menna ahel albeït—Selman est à nous et de nôtre maison;’ et il ajouta même: ‘Vhou ahed alladhin eschtacat aliahem alginnat—et il est un de ceux que le Paradis désire, c'est à dire, du nombre des predestinez.’ ”

“ L'auteur du ‘Raoudhat alakhîar’ rapporte, que Selman mourut dans la ville de Madain, capitale de la Perse, de laquelle Omar l'avoit fait gouverneur l'an 35 de l'Hégire, à l'âge de deux cent cinquante ans.

“ Le même auteur ajoute, qu'il vivoit au travail de ses mains, et qu'il donnoit le surplus de ce qu'il gagnoit aux pauvres. Abou Horaïrah et Ans Ben Malek, deux personnages de grande autorité sur les traditions, avoient reçu les leurs de Selman, et Selman immédiatement de Mahomet.” (Oriental Dictionary of D'Herbelôt, *in voce.*)

mile across. Taking advantage of this, I landed to bring away some bricks from Ctesiphon, and on my embarking them, a man tending his flocks came up and said—“Have you not even stones in your land, that you come here to carry away ours?” “Oh, yes, we have plenty; but I thought these of a better description.” “Indeed!” rejoined he, “then there can be no doubt you find gold in them.”

We met near this place a fleet of boats from Bassorah, laden with Bengal indigo, sugar, rice, shawls, long cloths, &c., for the Baghdad market—out two months. Every one of these vessels were laden far above the gunwale, on which a plank was fixed cemented together with bitumen. They were managed with great skill, for, whenever they obtained a slant of wind, they unfurled their large and graceful sails, and made the best of it. The surface of the desert was interspersed with sandy hillocks, spreading over a vast extent of the horizon; nothing was to be seen but mounds of barren sand: not even a blade of

grass or a date-tree could be traced. The very plants of this lonely waste appeared shrivelled and scathed. Yet, we saw some very beautiful butterflies, a great variety of birds of various coloured plumage, and several black-eyed gazelles.

During the night of the 17th, our bark made considerable progress to the southward, and before daybreak I landed to take my morning walk. After clearing some thick brushwood, I suddenly came upon a bed of “buteekhs,” or water-melons (*Cucurbitæ*). Two fierce-looking Arabs, armed with spears, suddenly sprang up from beneath a scarcely distinguishable knoll, and shouted out, in Arabic, “Rho hinnak! *Keep off!*” They had a fire lighted beneath the hillock, to scare away lions and wild boars, which here abound. On entering into conversation with them, they became civil, and one of them returned with me to the boat, bearing in his white woollen abbah a number of his large, refreshing “buteekhs.” We then weighed, and

continued to descend the rushing stream with great rapidity. In the course of the day many extensive encampments were seen pitched on both banks. In the afternoon, we moored alongside one of them, for the purpose of obtaining some milk; the women scampered off on our approach, and evinced great shyness and timidity. The younger ones were employed carrying water from the river to their goat-hair tents in sheepskin mussucks, or bags: they were all *en chemise*. This custom, so often alluded to in the Holy Scriptures, of females carrying water, prevailed from a period of the remotest antiquity, and appears as prevalent now in these deserts, as when Rebekah assuaged the thirst of the servant of Abraham.

“ And the servant took ten camels of the camels of his master, and departed; for all the goods of his master were in his hand: and he arose, and went to Mesopotamia, unto the city of Nahor.

“ And he made his camels to kneel down

without the city by a well of water at the time of the evening, even the time that women go out to draw water*.”

Shaw says, that in Barbary the women are obliged to go two or three miles with a pitcher or a goat's skin to fetch water.

The very young girls ran about *in puris naturalibus*, though some wore the usual blue cotton chemise, which was partially open, displaying the skin tatooed into various fantastic figures, which custom the Bedouin women fancy greatly enhances their charms in the eyes of their husbands.

As we continued to descend, the river was studded with small sandy islands covered with a low furze. On the 19th, we turned from the Tigris into a canal, called the “Shut al Hye,” or the River Hye, which connects the two great rivers of Mesopotamia, and which appeared about as broad as the city canal at Blackwall. It is only navigable for five months in the year ; and in August is

* Genesis xxiv. 10, 11.

nearly drained for the purposes of irrigation. We sailed through this canal for eleven hours, beneath the shade of a grove of turfahs, and then reached the hamlet of Koot al Hye. Here I made arrangements with the sheikh of the place, to accompany me to the ruins of Waasut, once the capital of southern Mesopotamia*. He produced some huge camels, as tall as a house. Taking with us three of his followers, we were in

* Vasseth, et Vassith. Nom d'une ville située sur le Tigre, entre celles de Coufah et de Bassorah, et c'est cette situation, au milieu de ces deux villes, qui lui donner ce nom. Elle fut bâtie par Hegiag, gouverneur de l'Iraque, sous le règne d'Abdal Malek, cinquième khalife de la race des Ommiades, l'an 83 de l'Hégire, selon Ben Schúhnah, ou 84, selon Khezdemir. (D'Herbelôt.)

Ebn Haukal says, Waset is situated on the two banks of the Dejlah (Tigris). It has been built since the introduction of Islam. The foundation was laid by Hejaje Yusuf. It is strongly built; and the castle of Hejaje is there on the western side, with a few fields belonging to it. Waset is a populous town, and is well supplied with provisions; of a purer air than Basrah, the vicinity of it is well planted with gardens and well cultivated.

a few minutes on our way to this celebrated city. We goaded the animals into a reluctant canter; at first, we flew across the sands and herbage with rapidity, but the poor creatures soon relapsed into their ordinary gait. The pack-saddles added to our misery, for they were composed of bare boards with sharp wooden nobs, which galled and chafed us at every step. A canter over the desert on a fine Arabian horse, is indeed an indescribable pleasure: one's spirits exult at the seemingly interminable expanse, and stretch away into infinite space, as if disembodied from all earthly incumbrances, for—

“ I love all waste
And solitary places; where we taste
The pleasure of believing what we see
Is boundless, as we wish our souls to be.”

But the trot of a stubborn, stumbling camel is a very different description of enjoyment; and, being a formidable description of *monture*, a “*faux pas*” in this instance, as in

more serious cases, is without remedy: there is no possibility of bringing him up, so you must reconcile yourself, when you get on such vehicles, to all risks of breaking, at least, an arm or a leg. But, barring all apprehensions of danger, and all precautions for personal security, there is a feeling approaching to rapture in the independence of a desert life, which no one can imagine save those who have experienced it, and which I have always felt on finding myself amongst men who have received me with frankness and affability. The unanimity which prevails amongst the members of an Arab tribe, amply repay them for all their privations. A simple covering of goats' or camels' hair, which the desert Arab carries with him, serves to protect himself and family from the severity of the weather. Nothing bounds his desires; he can select the spot of earth he chooses, and, without being necessitated to distinguish property by its boundaries, he divides with his neighbour the pasturage of

the desert, for the nourishment of his innumerable sheep, goats, and camels.

Long after sunset, we reached Waasut. The surrounding country was an expanse of desolation—a vast sea without water—recalling to my mind the same desert waves which lie around the desolated heaps of fallen Babylon. No cultivation whatever was distinguishable; the only vegetation we could see consisted of a few shrivelled plants, some tufts of reedy grass, and a low furze, of which the camels ate abundantly. We found that the description of these plains, as given by Xenophon, was strikingly accurate. “The country was a plain throughout, as even as the sea, and full of wormwood: if any other kind of shrubs or reeds grew there, they had all an aromatic smell; but no trees appeared. Of wild creatures, the most numerous were wild asses, and not a few ostriches, besides bustards and roe-deer, which our horsemen sometimes chased*.”

* Xenophon's *Anabasis*. Book i.

We rested for the night in a miserable reed-hut, which could barely afford us shelter, and on the morrow commenced our survey of Waasut, which consisted of about forty or fifty wretched houses, built of mud and fragments of brick dug out of the ruins of the old city, which lay entombed beneath dark hillocks of sand. Around these spread a few monuments of former edifices, and an antique crumbling wall encompassing masses of decayed brickwork, where the ounce and the lion found a secure and seldom disturbed retreat. A more thorough change cannot be conceived than that which has occurred at Waasut. Its streets, once the scene of active commerce from every part of India, Persia, and Arabia, are now ploughed over by the Arabian fellah, and browsed by the flock of the shepherd. Its mouldering and time-worn buildings, merely whisper the tale of its celebrity, entombed as it now lies in a sepulchre rising around them by its own decay.

The unwillingness of my guides to remain

on this site, prevented my digging for any ancient fragments of statuary, inscriptions, or engraved gems, which are generally discoverable amongst the *débris* of all the Mahomedan cities that rose to eminence upon the decline of Seleucia and Ctesiphon. On my last visit to ancient Babylon, I found an intaglio, of which an enlarged representation is here given.



The approach of night was here indescribably beautiful: the expiring rays of the

sun stained the firmament with bright and lovely colours; and as he sunk beneath the desert, the whole sky blazed, and the western horizon continued brighter than molten gold. When the moon appeared with her silvery light, these gorgeous colours faded, and were succeeded by a few fleecy specks, which looked "like lambs grazing on the hills in heaven."

Remounting our camels, we returned towards Koot. On clearing the low ridge of mounds immediately connected with the site of Waasut, we made for the Hye, and travelled by the large sparkling stars, which in this region are bright beyond expression. From their light, one might actually read the smallest printed volume. Diodorus Siculus expressly states, that travellers in the southern part of Arabia directed their course *by the Bears*, ἀπὸ τῶν Ἀρκτῶν*. We passed many encampments, which were always pitched on the shelving sides of a

* Lib. i. p. 156, edit. Rhodoman.

sand-hill, and immediately over a deep water-course. They all had troops of dogs for the protection of their flocks, whose incessant barkings at the sight of a stranger, preclude the possibility of an enemy taking them by surprise. The Bedouin camp, as well as the Koordish, is well watched by these rapacious animals. We reposed beneath the shelter of some tents, called "Boorkah," where our reception by the chief of the tribe was most cordial; he shook our hands, and then kissed us as the men do in France. He immediately killed and broiled a sheep. It was past midnight when we supped with him: the camel drivers also shared our meal.

Towards morning of the 22nd, we passed some ruined forts, around which were flocks of sheep and goats, some oxen, camels, and multitudes of jackals; which latter were always our constant companions: and so bold were they, a horseman might have easily ridden them down. At sunrise we found ourselves in the immediate vicinity of the Hye; and, on rejoining our

boat, unmoored again, and glided through the canal as swiftly and smoothly as if we had been on board of a Richmond steamer. We constantly saw several herds of buffaloes driven into the water, through which they swam to the islands scattered throughout different parts of its stream. These little spots are submerged at the season of increase, and no sooner dry than they become clothed with the greenest swards. The air was insupportably sultry throughout this whole tract:

“ It was so calm, that scarce the feathery weed
Sown by some eagle on the topmost stone,
Swayed in the air.”

Our thermometer stood at 108° of Fahrenheit within the cabin, although we were beneath the shade of an Athul or turfah grove, which literally swarmed with nightingales. The nackodah, or captain of the boat, frequently called his crew to prayer, in which our Mahommedan passengers joined. Their simple sincerity made a

deep impression on me; indeed, nothing can be more exemplary than the attention with which they perform their public worship. Among other indispensable rules of their faith, ablution is one of the chief. This rite is divided into three kinds. The first is performed before prayer. It commences by washing both hands, and repeating these words:—"Praise be to Ullah, who created clean water, and gave it the virtue to purify: he also hath rendered our faith conspicuous." Water is then taken in the right hand thrice, and the mouth being washed, the worshipper subjoins:—"I pray thee, O Lord, to let me taste of that water which thou hast given to thy Prophet Mahomet in Paradise, more fragrant than musk, whiter than milk, sweeter than honey; and which has the power to quench for ever the thirst of him that drinks it." After some water has been applied to the nose, the face is washed three times, and behind the ears: water is then taken with both hands, beginning with the right, and thrown to the

elbow. The washing of the head next follows, and the apertures of the ears with the thumbs; afterwards the neck with all the fingers, and finally the feet. In this last operation it is sufficient to wet the sandal only. At each ceremonial a suitable petition is offered, and the whole concludes thus: "Hold me up firmly, O Lord! and suffer not my foot to slip, that I may not fall from the bridge into hell *."

We now reached a custom-house, where a

* This bridge is in the Arabic language called "Ul Sirat." It is supposed to span the infernal regions, is represented as narrower than a spider's web and sharper than the edge of a sword. Though the attempt to cross it be

" More full of peril, and advent'rous spirit,
Than to o'erwalk a current roaring loud
On the unsteadfast footing of a spear, "

yet the Paradise of Mahomet can be entered by no other avenue. Those, indeed, who have behaved well need not be alarmed; mixed characters will find it difficult; but the wicked soon miss their standing, and plunge headlong into the abyss. (Habesci. Pocock in Port. Mos. p. 282.)

walled village was situated, and moored for the night at a short distance from the bank, so as to prevent the intrusion of the curious of both sexes. An officer, however, boarded us: I filled his pipe from my own tobacco-bag, and he thanked me for a luxury he declared he had not enjoyed for many a long day. He complained sadly of the despotism of the chiefs of tribes, declaring that the whole pashalic was under the pressure of a triple harrow. "Would to God," he said, "the English would invade our country; with what joy every soul of us would flock to their standard, and massacre our despoilers!" On his returning to the shore, I gave him a bag of coffee, some dates, and a couple of chiboukes.

July the 23rd—An easterly wind springing up sent us spanking along at such a rate, that we entered the Euphrates at eight o'clock in the morning, and passed several villages embosomed amidst date groves. The plain towards the great western desert on our right was rich and deep, with a fine

loamy soil, and clothed with a verdant carpet. It was farmed by Aajeel, the chieftain of the powerful tribe of Montefikh*, where the fixed villages are obliged to give an unlimited credit to his soldiers, whose depredations are, of course, clear gains to them.

At noon, we moored off the town of Sooksheook (the sheikh's bazaar), which stands on the western bank of the Euphrates: all the inhabitants turned out to see us, for they are so seldom visited by Europeans of any description, that the arrival of an English lady and children excited every one's attention. The circumstance of our visit must have afforded them a topic of conversation for many days.

Our nackodah and his crew insisted on

* The great Montefikh tribe occupy the right bank of the Euphrates from the town of Samavah to the sea, and along the Hye canal to the ancient capital of southern Mesopotamia. Aajeel, if pressed, could bring twenty thousand well-armed men into the field. He has at least five thousand horsemen.

stopping here to change their boat, as well as to purchase pipes and coffee for their own private use. To this delay I was obliged to submit, although we were put to great inconvenience, and lost three hours of the fairest breeze. During this detention, we saw men crossing the stream on trusses of straw, with buffaloes swimming before them. One held the animal's tail with his left hand, and guided it by a cord fastened to its horns with the right, whilst his companions steered with oars, and thus preserved the balance of this simple bark. Young lads were observed swimming across with herds of oxen before them; and there was something interesting in the manner in which they also guided these animals through the water, waving to the foremost with their sticks, and pointing out their true course.

Nearer the bank, herds of buffaloes were enjoying their favourite pleasure of immersion up to their heads. These animals are amphibious, and, whilst on

shore, nearly madden from the eternal sting of a disagreeable insect that exists on their bodies. They make a peculiar lowing while immersed, expressive of the great pleasure they enjoy. Upon their sharp pointed horns the crows delight to perch. I do not distinctly remember at this time, whether any traveller has noticed, that on the banks of all the rivers in this country these birds are *gray*—even on the banks of the Araxes a black crow was a *rara avis*.

At three o'clock in the afternoon the breeze got light, but the current was sufficiently strong to carry us at the rate of four miles an hour. The periodical rise had this year been unusually rapid, and the river's channel was now wide and deep. In the month of October, the Euphrates is at its lowest ebb, and from that time to the end of March has many shallows. On both sides, we passed the extensive camps of the Montefikh Bedouins, who were watching their flocks and herds; their horses and asses were picquetted near their tents, which

is always done by fastening their hind legs to a rope attached to an iron-ringed peg driven into the ground ; but their camels were never secured. All these camps were constantly on the move from place to place, ever ready for attack and defence, and during their wars even, the combatants are surrounded by their women, and are as solicitous to feed their flocks as to engage the enemy.

The women that we saw on the banks of this stream had the blue chemise descending below the knee, with a multitude of silver rings pending from the ears ; and round their necks hung various coloured beads intermixed with silver coins. All of them wore their hair plaited like the thong of a whip, had tatooed chins, and some few were similarly marked between the eyebrows, and around the neck. A young Arab girl is not all bad looking, but nothing can exceed the disgusting appearance of the old women. Both sexes use the "*kahel*" to their eyelids, and wear ajeabs

or charms against all disorders and misfortunes.

Those women who belong to the pastoral tribes never attempt to hide the face; it is only the fixed villagers who are so fastidious; and yet, I have seen these very damsels washing their clothes on the banks in perfect nudity; and, when surprised, have actually covered their faces with their hands, disregarding all other exposure. The abbahs of the men had white and brown stripes passing vertically down them; this cloak serves them by day and night, as they never unclothe. They make them of goat's or camel's hair; and, when a purchaser tests them, he fills them with water, and, should a single drop escape, after a duration of a quarter of an hour, he would reject them as being imperfect.

The banks now became nearly on a level with the surface of the stream, and highly cultivated to its brink. The date groves thickened, and the villages had more nume-

rous inhabitants. On the 25th, we were hailed by a Turkish brig riding at anchor off Koorna; she belonged to the Bassorah government, and was placed here to put down piracy, for which service she was eminently *unfitted*.

Having reached the southernmost point in Mesopotamia, formed by the conflux of the Euphrates and Tigris, we had, as the prophet Joel says, "the land of Eden before us, and behind us a desolate wilderness*." Hale, in his *New Analysis of Chronology*, says, "It should seem that Paradise lay on the confluent stream of the rivers Euphrates and Tigris, but principally on the eastern bank, which divided into two branches above the garden, and two more below it. From the description of these rivers by ancient historians and geographers, Major Rennel infers, that in ancient times they preserved distinct courses to the sea, until the reign of Alexander; although, at no

* Joel ii. 3.

great distance of time afterwards, they became united and joined the sea in a collective stream. The Cyrus and Araxes also kept distinct courses in ancient times. This, however, does not invalidate a primeval junction of these rivers before the deluge, which certainly produced a prodigious alteration in the face of the primitive globe. The changes in the beds of other great rivers, such as the Nile, the Ganges, and Barampooter, even in modern times, are known to be very great."

Beyond Koorna, the eastern shore of the "Great River of Scripture*" was low and swampy until we passed the mouth of the Kerkha, or Howaizah river†, at the hamlet

* In Scripture history it appears that the Euphrates was thought superior to the Nile, for we read in the book of Genesis, that "the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the *great* river, the river Euphrates." (Genesis xv. 18.)

† So called from a town situated on the banks of the above named river. The town is raised on the site of a more ancient place.

of Suaeb, where a date grove commences, and extends to the canal of Al Hid, which flows from the Tigris into the Kerkha, through groves of a species of calamus, growing luxuriantly in a low tract of country, between the Tigris and the Kerkha, inundated by the overflow of the former. On the subject of the canals and marshes of this region, an apposite quotation may be gleaned from a Persian biographical work, entitled *Megalis al Moumenin*. The author of the *Moajun* (the celebrated *Yacuti* of Harna, the geographer) remarks of *Howaizah*, that it is the diminutive of *Houzah*, which signifies "collected, or brought together." This district was peopled and organised by *Amir Dabis-ebn-Ghadhb*, the *asadi*, in the *khalifat* of *Tayaa-lillah*, who here formed colonies of his tribe and dependants. This *Dabis* is of the same tribe and name, though not the same individual, as the one who founded the town of *Hillah*, on the *Euphrates*. *Hawaizah* is placed between *Waasut*, *Bassorah*, and

Khuzistan, in the midst of lakes and marshes which were formed by the inundation of the Tigris, in the time of Kesra Parviz.

The same author also remarks, that the islands of Susiana are considered to form a part of this district. He enumerates three hundred and sixty distinct villages, the capital of which was named Madinah. They produced rice, dates, silk, oranges, limes, grapes, fish, and game in abundance. The inhabitants, who are Shiahhs, are very numerous, warlike, highly superstitious, and notoriously predatory and revengeful.

The opposite or western bank was covered with an uninterrupted grove, with large clusters of huts peeping through it, and is distinguished by the appellative "Shamaul," or north-western district. It comprehends many villages: as Robat, Dan, Nohar Omar, and Shirsh. It is said to be pierced by at least three hundred canals and water-courses, among which are Nohar Salah, Fathiyah, Batinah, and others, which we cannot here

enumerate*. Towards nightfall we passed a long, low island, on a level with the stream, which during the springs must be entirely submersed. Several fellahs had passed to it upon a stratum of rush, which they were loading with grass to carry down towards Bassorah for sale. May not these be similar to the "vessels of bulrushes upon the waters," alluded to by Isaiah (xviii. 2)? We also saw numerous square enclosures, consisting of reeds placed in the mud close together, and extending a few yards from the shore, for the purpose of catching fish: they formed a labyrinth terminating in a death-chamber, whence the fish are taken at pleasure.

There are two kinds caught here by the Arabs:—one they call Ull-Bore, the other Ull-Benny. Although very bony, we thought

* Towards Babylon and Seleucia, where the rivers Tigris and Euphrates swell over their banks and water the country, the same kind of husbandry is practised as in Egypt, but to better effect and greater profit. The people here let in the water by sluices and flood-gates as they require it. (Pliny, Nat. Hist. Book xviii. cap. 18.)

them good eating. Here also were rice grounds, embanked from the river by low mud walls. They can be laid under water at the discretion of the cultivator. Whole fields of lucerne waved beautifully along the banks, which sometimes yield *eight* crops in the year.

A little below this spot, we passed the village and tower of Dair, very prettily situated on the margin of the stream, and embosomed amidst tamarisk trees. The Arabian historian Fath Ullah, in his history of modern Bassorah, entitled *Zad ul Moosafir*, written upwards of a century and a half ago, speaks of Dair, as a town north-west of Bassorah, remarkable for a tower of such colossal dimensions and beautiful structure as to appear to be the work of genii; and Ibn ul Wardi, in addition to a similar account, says, that strange sounds are occasionally heard to proceed from the interior of this tower. Great antiquity is attributed to this minaret by all the natives of the country.

The hamlet of Maghaul is marked out by a large mud walled house standing on the river's margin, and exhibiting the appearance of a "nunnery." It has been recently erected by the political resident in Turkish Arabia, and is occasionally occupied by him as a country seat. The distance by land from this to Bassorah is about seven miles. The traces of the canal of Obillah, the Apologus of Arrian and Nearchus, may yet be traced from this neighbourhood, almost as far as the vicinity of Zobair, which town stands at the distance of eight miles to the south-west of the present Bassorah, and is the site of the ancient city of Omar, where may still be seen the mosque of Ali (not the Barmecide), the nephew of Mahommed.

Five miles below Maghaul, and on the same side of the stream, a minaret marks the entrance to the Bassorah Khore, or creek. This arabesque minaret rises in the form of a spire, like the tomb of Haroun al Raschid's consort on the western bank of

the Tigris, at Baghdad. We anchored near the *mutesellem's* (governor) guard ship, and found the "Hydery" of Calcutta, and the "Sophia" of Bombay, moored in five fathoms at high-water mark.

CHAPTER V.

Bassorah—Its Commerce—My Ascent of the Euphrates—Expensive Interment—Sacred City—Projected Survey of the Euphrates—District of Junub—Canal of Hafar—The Karoon—Maritime Arabs—Arrival at Bushire—Trade of Bushire—Trade of the Persian Gulf—Ophthalmia—Abdul Russool—Women of Bushire—Persian Tobacco—The Muezzins—Russian Ambition.

BASSORAH is the principal inlet from the Persian Gulf, through which all eastern productions find their way into the Turkish empire. Although its commerce is at present inconsiderable, it would be immense were only the rich and extensive countries traversed by the Euphrates and Tigris inhabited by a civilised and industrious people. Its imports from Europe are by the way of Beirout, Haleb (Aleppo), and Baghdad—from India, *via* Muscat and Bushire. From Persia it imports shawls, carpets, and jewels; from Bahrain, pearls; and from Mocha, slaves and coffee. Its exports are bullion, copper (from

Asia Minor), raw-silk, horses, gall-nuts, and a great variety of drugs. The export of dates alone exceeds twelve thousand tons per annum. The trade with the interior of the country is not conducted by caravans, as formerly, Baghdad now being the emporium whence all the kafilahs start. Commerce might, however, be carried on to immense advantage by means of a few small iron steamers.

I hope I shall not be indicted for “*crimen læsæ majestatis*,” if I state in this place, that when I commanded the escort attached to the political resident in Turkish Arabia, and with views precisely assimilating with those subsequently adopted by Colonel Chesney *, I ascended the Euphrates (May

* In a letter to me on this subject, Colonel Chesney thus expresses himself: “I claim nothing before 1830. Any voyage made by you previously must have been the very *first* in modern times.” The reader will presently see, that even the *official* reply of the East India Company to my application to survey the Euphrates, was dated as early as 1829.

1826) accompanied by my family, in a yacht belonging to the British residency, and visited many of the desert tribes that periodically frequent its banks, from whom we experienced much attention and hospitality. The only instance of hostility to which we were ever subjected, was on a more recent voyage (September 1826) upon the Karoon, at the village of Weiss, beyond the ruins of Ahwaz, and near to the site of ancient Susa, where an armed body of Persians assembled and molested our trackers, not however by any acts of open violence, but by intimidating menaces and gestures, repeated with such frequency that they refused to proceed further, so that we were at length compelled to return again to Ahwaz, Mahumrah, and Bassorah.

In 1827, I repeated the ascent of the Euphrates in a boat of the country, as far as Hit, which is upwards of seven hundred miles from the sea; and in the following year, I visited the whole of Southern Mesopotamia, and a great portion of Arabia border-

ing the Euphrates, including the towns of Zobair, Semavah, Roomaheyyah, Sorah, Kufa, Hira, Hillah, Hit, Kerbela, Messhed Houssain, and Messhed Ali. These last-named towns are in the eyes of all the tribe of Sheeah rendered sacred by the memory of two of the greatest martyrs of that sect *.

I found Messhed Ali governed by a zâbit, who was in subjection to the pasha of Baghdad, and paying his highness an immense annual revenue for the privilege of "fleecing" those pilgrims who bring hither for interment dead bodies, even from India and other distant parts of the East. The method of disposing of these corpses is deserving of some notice. Those pilgrims who can only afford a limited donation for the supposed salvation of the departed, are, as in other countries nearer home, neglected, or, as the saying

* It is scarcely necessary to remind the reader, that the Mahommedans are divided into two hostile sects, "Soone," and "Sheeah." The former hold that Osman was the lawful successor of the Prophet; whilst the latter assert that he was an usurper, and that Ali was the next in succession.

is, "looked down upon," and the defunct is, consequently, thrown headlong into a deep well dug expressly for the purpose, after the manner of the parsee burial-places in Bombay, Surat, Broach, and other stations of Western India, where these stock-jobbing gentry are located. But those relations whose offerings are liberal at the tomb of their patron saint, get their dead easily interred, until others equally rich and ambitious for a sacred spot arrive, when the remains of the first are unceremoniously exhumated and cast into the well, to make room for those of the second. The Soonnite inhabitants are extremely jealous and uncivil to strangers, and no Christian is knowingly admitted within the city walls. Colonel Lockett, of the Bengal army, and myself, are, I believe, the only Englishmen who ever visited this sacred city.

In the year 1828, I returned to England by the way of Asia Minor, Persia, Russia, and Germany, never doubting for a moment that, in the event of any of the officers in the

Honourable East India Company's service being appointed to examine the rivers of Turkish Arabia, I should be associated with them, and this inference was materially strengthened by the result of several interviews with Mr. Peacock, who was at the head of the Examiner's Office, East India House. This gentleman took the warmest interest in the whole subject, and he led me to infer that, if I could only defer my departure for the East until the fall of the year 1829, I might obtain the employment I had for so many years anticipated. I did so; and in the interim sent off the whole of my baggage to the Mediterranean, through the hands of Mr. Parbury, of Leadenhall-street, and neither he nor myself have since been able to learn any tidings of it or of the little "Daphne," which vessel conveyed it hence towards the Syrian coast. When, however, I officially applied for an extension of my furlough, for the purpose of taking a survey of the Euphrates, how great was my disappointment, to find that my wishes could

not be complied with, notwithstanding the fact of my having given up my staff appointment in Turkish Arabia, and with it the *whole* of my pay and allowances from the very day on which I quitted the residency gates at Bassorah for Europe—neither did I, on the occasion of making the application, solicit any emolument or remuneration whatsoever, nor have I since received on this account a single fraction, either by way of salary, allowance, pecuniary present, or recompense of any sort or kind *.

* The official letter, refusing me leave to examine the Euphrates, ran thus:—

“ *East India House, 2nd Oct. 1829.*

“ SIR,—The Court of Directors of the East India Company have considered your letter, adverting to the permission you have received to return to your duty *overland*, and requesting that your furlough may be extended for twelve months, to enable you to survey the Euphrates with a view to steam navigation, and I am commanded to acquaint you, that the Court have declined to comply with your present application.

(Signed) “ P. AUBER, *Secretary.*”

“ Captain R. MIGNAN.”

Having obtained the permission of the Court of Directors to return to my duty abroad, I waited upon Mr. Auber, then Secretary at the East India House, to receive the necessary certificates and to make my bow, when he assured me, that my application to survey the Euphrates was negatived from political motives only, and that, in the event of any expedition being sent to the Euphrates, the government of India would be the engine to set it in motion. I therefore determined that, whenever circumstances should again present a favourable opportunity, my application should be renewed.

Accordingly, I proceeded to Tabriz, by the route described in the foregoing pages, furnished with credentials from Lord Heytesbury and other distinguished noblemen to Sir John Macdonald Kinneir, then our ambassador in that country, who took the greatest interest in our proceedings, and who advised my going on to Baghdad, where, by the assistance of the political resident, I

could mature my plans. In this city I was detained for months by reiterated assurances of official employment, when the unexpected arrival from Calcutta of the resident's brother, caused an instantaneous revolution in the resident's intentions regarding me. I was then indulged with a *petite entrée*, and most unceremoniously told that I might return again to England, or to Persia, or to India, as my services would not be required—his highness the pasha of Baghdad having granted to Mr. James Taylor *only*, the privilege of surveying and navigating the rivers of Mesopotamia. This gentleman proceeded *en route* for Europe, to make arrangements for carrying into effect the plans he had formed with his brother, for the establishment of a steam intercourse between India and Turkish Arabia; but he had only advanced as far as the small desert that lies between Mosoul and Nisibin, when himself and two other of his companions (Messrs. Aspinall and Bowater) were barbarously murdered by a body of savage Koords.

On my reaching Bombay, the governor, Sir John Malcolm, directed me to throw into the form of a written application the nature of the employment I solicited, and that he would immediately acquiesce thereto; but no sooner had I done so, than I received a demi-official note from Lieutenant-Colonel Aitchison, then Adjutant-General of the Bombay army, to attend at his office, when and where I was informed that if I failed to proceed to rejoin my regiment, then stationed at Deesa, a distance of full five hundred miles from the presidency, in a certain given time (about forty-eight hours), he would place me under close arrest.

In a statement of this description, it would be almost impossible to enter into a detail of all the extraordinary circumstances which marked the course of certain proceedings taken against me, for having expressed my desire to make a survey of the Euphrates; but it is sufficient for my present purpose simply to relate, that *thus* was I finally disposed of, after having acted

pro tempore as political resident in Turkish Arabia, at a period of some difficulty and danger, (during the disturbances of 1826, in the city of Bassorah)—devoted my time and means towards the advancement of discovery in that most interesting country—traversed Babylonia and Chaldæa *on foot*—the shores of the Persian Gulf on both sides—Persia from one extremity to the other—Koordistaun, Khuzistaun, and the whole of Southern Mesopotamia. During this period, my staff salary amounted to thirty rupees *per mensem*, or thirty-six pounds English money *per annum*, a sum which a young cadet of only a few weeks' service with a native infantry regiment enjoys, under the head of "Company allowance!"

I crave the reader's pardon for this digression, and for having obtruded upon his notice such an egotistical narration, which, assuredly, would have been omitted *in toto*, had I possessed any other means of making known the real facts of the case, as far as I

am personally concerned. But my name having been publicly introduced before a committee of the House of Commons, in a manner which implied that I had been instructed by the Court of Directors of the East India Company to survey the Euphrates, I feel it due to myself to offer this *exposé* on my own behalf, and to add my conviction that if I had only the good fortune to have belonged to the "Royal" instead of the "Local" army, I might (Colonel Chesney himself did so in the *first* instance) have taken a survey of the Euphrates without even asking or receiving the permission of either the British government or the Court of Directors of the East India Company.

As the ship "Sophia," belonging to Arab merchants, was on the eve of her departure for Bushire, we transhipped our baggage, and at four o'clock on the afternoon of the fourth of August, weighed, and dropped down the river, passing the district of Junub, or South, which comprehends innumerable

noble canals and populous villages between Bassorah and the sea, on the south-eastern shore of the Shut-ul-Arab*. The successive order of the principal villages is this, commencing from Bassorah:—Minávi, Serraji, Hamdan, Yusafáy, Abul Khasib, Nafali, Zan, Khist, and Shabbani, which is the last of the flourishing dependencies of Bassorah. The tract called “Dubbah” commences to the south of these hamlets, and by our nautical men is called “the tombs,” from two spire-topped mosques, which are seen peeping through the trees and within a hundred yards of the river.

We soon came abreast of Ras Zaine, opposite to which on the eastern or left bank is the canal of “Hafar,” leading into the Bamishere arm of the Shut-ul-Arab, as also into the noble river Karoon. The appellative “Bamishere” has been given by

* “It is said that the rivers or streams of Bassorah were counted in the time of Belal-ibn-Ali Bordeh, and amounted to the number of one hundred and twenty thousand streams.” (Ebn Haukal).

the Arabs to one of the seven mouths of the Euphrates. It is navigable for vessels of a small draught of water either into the Karoon, by the right, or the Shut-ul-Arab, by the Hafar canal on the left. The only entrance now taken by large ships bound up to Bassorah, is called after that city, "Khore Bassorah." Ships of seven hundred and twenty tons burden can effect their passage through it.

Upon the north-western point of the Delta thus formed by this canal between the Bamishere and the Shut-ul-Arab, the town of Mahumrah is situated, which belongs to the Chaub Sheikh, whose principality is quite independent of the Mutessellim of Bassorah, or the Turkish Arabian government.

The Hafar is most undoubtedly a canal of great antiquity, as it was by this channel that Alexander sent his fleet when he descended from Susiana to the head of the Delta, and thence by the Euphrates to the sea.

In the year 1826, when on a journey to the ruins of Ahwaz, in the Persian province of Khuzistan*, I sailed through the Hafar, and examined it so narrowly that I have no hesitation in declaring it to be an artificial work. The natives will not for a moment admit the notion; they insist that it is a natural passage as old as the creation; and certainly a superficial examination of this canal would easily impress any person with the same idea, as nothing is more likely

* The reader is referred to the pages of the second volume of the transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, for an account of my tour and operations in this province. With the exception of Seistan, it is the most interesting in Persia. To the antiquary in particular, it presents so many objects of the greatest interest in the ancient remains at Ahwaz, Shuster, Susa, and Dezfool. It has also the additional claim of possessing the last remnant of the Chaldees and Sabæans, the oldest people upon earth.

A Persian dictionary, under the words "Khuz" and "Khuzistan," states that these are both names of a country in Persia of which Shuster is the capital; the first signifies, also, sugar; and the second, any country productive of the sugar cane; or a manufactory of this article.

than for a large, broad, and deep canal to assume the appearance of a natural stream after such a lapse of time. In support of the opinion I have above advanced, I may adduce its present appellative "*Hafar*," which is an Arabic verb signifying "to dig, or turn up the earth," and is applicable to any artificial excavation. Its banks are lined with groves of date trees, where hogs, partridges, wild ducks, and snipes, abound. The Karasoo (the Choaspes of the ancients) mixes its waters with this stream, and by the natives is considered the purest that can be found throughout the East. It is without exception the clearest of all the rivers in Turkish Arabia, for, if a vessel is hastily filled with the water of the Karoon, no sediment or discoloration is observable; whereas both the Tigris and Euphrates leave a thick deposit of mud.

In ancient times the monarchs of Parthia are said to have drunk the water of this river only. Herodotus, Strabo, Tibullus, and others, call it βασιλικον ὕδωρ, regia lympa,

and the first historian says, "There is also carried with him (Cyrus) water of the river Choaspes, which flows near Susa, for the king drinks of no other*." Milton thus alludes to it—

"There Susa by Choaspes' amber stream,
The drink of none but kings†."

The illustrious Arabian geographer, Abulfeda, in his chapter on rivers, says, that "the Karoon nearly equals the Tigris in breadth; its banks are adorned with gardens and pleasure-grounds, and enriched by extensive plantations of sugar cane, and other valuable productions of the vegetable kingdom‡."

Muttowah Islet lies immediately opposite the Delta, and its produce is fully fifteen fold. Beyond this we passed the hamlet of Sihhan, where two large channels lead into the interior, and overflow the whole country. These channels have no outlet, nor are they

* Clio, clxxxvi.

† Paradise Regained, Book ii.

‡ Abulfeda Takwin ul Bildan; cap. De Fluviis.

navigable for the smallest boats. The villages of Khast and Mehellah stand close upon the margin of the stream, surrounded with fine pasturage for sheep and cattle. The Arabs here are tall and athletic, and many of them have very handsome countenances. Their complexions are dark from constant exposure to the sun, and from not being very particular in their ablutions. They never shave the head, but plait their hair in long tresses that hang on each side of the face, and sometimes reach down to the breast. They are capable of enduring the greatest fatigue, and half a dozen of them think nothing of tracking a deeply laden boat up to Bassorah. At this point the banks of the Euphrates become perfectly barren, and level with the water's edge. Hence to the sea, we could scarcely discern the land.

On the morning of the sixth, we stood over the bar at the mouth of the Shut-ul-Arab in very shoal water (about two fathoms and a half), and, bearing away with a fine north-westerly breeze, anchored in the inner

harbour of Bushire at three o'clock on the afternoon of the seventh: H. M. ship "Challenger," commanded by Captain Charles Fremantle, was lying in these roads. We found Colonel Wilson, the resident, Captain Hennell, his assistant, and Dr. Riach, their medical officer, at the British residency, all of whom warmly welcomed and hospitably entertained us.

The general effect of Bushire (the Mesambria of Nearchus and Arrian) is widely different to that of Bassorah. It is situated at the northern extremity of a low sandy peninsula, impregnated with saline matter, and entirely denuded of vegetation save a few thorny shrubs and salt water plants. The mountainous ridges of Persia, at a distance of forty-five miles from the town, rise to an elevation of two thousand feet above the plain. That portion facing the sea is not uninviting, but on the land side, it has a miserable appearance, and the houses being of clay, or of a soft sandy stone incrustated with shells, look as if they were

only half finished. The streets and bazaars are very inferior to those of Bassorah, and the number of inhabitants are at least one-tenth less, although the trade of both are most intimately connected.

The population of this sea-port constantly fluctuates, but Colonel Wilson estimates it at about twenty thousand. The imports and exports are very similar to those of Bassorah. Of the latter, raw silk is, perhaps, the most important. Every province throughout Persia produces some. Gheelan alone yields nine hundred thousand pounds of this article. The wines of Ispahaun and Shirauz enjoy a well-merited celebrity. Of the tobacco I have already spoken, and the yellow berries used in dyeing fetch immense prices in all European markets. The importation of copper from the Persian Gulf to India, is valued at thirty thousand pounds sterling per annum. This copper is partly the produce of the mines in Asia Minor. The total value of the entire trade between the Persian Gulf and the whole of India, amounts to at least one million

annually. Of this amount Bombay participates to the greatest extent, then Calcutta, and, lastly, Madras. The late Sir John Malcolm wisely suggested that the permanent possession of the island of Karak, which is within forty miles of Bushire, would be an object of considerable importance, as its possession would not only have enabled us to command the navigation of the Gulf, but it would form a depot where goods destined for both Persia and Turkish Arabia might be warehoused in safety and convenience*. A great taste for British cottons prevails all over these countries, and it most assuredly is of the last importance that nothing be omitted that may serve to facilitate the diffusion of this taste, and the means of gratifying it.

The climate is very trying to the European constitution, particularly during the months

* Fresh water is so dear and bad at Bushire, that ships cannot take any supply on board, whereas it may be had at Karak in the greatest abundance, and free of all charge.

of June, July, and August; and ophthalmia is frightfully prevalent. The natives of the town walk about with the disease upon them, and, except it rises to an aggravated pitch, they take no remedies; hence the number of blind at every corner of the town. It appears principally among the lower orders, and of them the women and children are most severely afflicted. There can be no doubt that the disease proceeds from the united influence of the excessive heat of the atmosphere, the great glare of the sun reflected from the desert, and the fine particles of dust blowing about in all directions, while during the night the atmosphere is damp from the copious deposits of dew, to the effect of which all the inhabitants are exposed for the greater part of the year, as they sleep on the tops of their houses without any curtains between them and the sky, and generally with the head entirely uncovered. Hitherto I had escaped, but a few days after our arrival here I became blind for sixteen days. The town had been visited by the cholera

and plague, and was now almost entirely depopulated.

Abdul Russool, the sheikh or governor, was of a cruel, crafty, and avaricious disposition, and his only aim was that of filling his treasury, no matter how. Instead of being respected, he was execrated on all hands. The ships trading to this port are compelled to load with his goods, and convey them to India at a lower rate than they can possibly afford, and when any of the stock he has laid by in his granaries is scarce and dear in the bazaar, he forces the merchants to purchase from him at *his* own price, which is never less than fifty per cent above what they may procure it elsewhere.

Justice is here a marketable commodity; he who has the heaviest purse secures from the kazi the most favourable decision, and a rich man, although his hands may have been steeped in the blood of his own parent, can, by bribery, escape with impunity. The sheikh is, notwithstanding these little *foibles*, a shrewd and clever man, and a good *practical* magis-

trate. He often visits the coffee-houses incognito, and few robberies are ever committed without detection. He has a son about four-and-twenty years old, of whom he is most lavish in his abuse. "Look at that poor miserable animal," he would exclaim; "when my eyes are put out, that 'kulb *' will be sheikh."

The male inhabitants of Bushire did not possess the free and independent demeanour of the Nomadic Arabs, although they were decidedly superior to the cringing Hindoo. Of the women, I saw very little, they being under a strict *surveillance*, closely watched whenever they went abroad, and muffled up as usual. One or two young Armenian ladies, who called on Mrs. Mignan, were exceedingly pretty, though the cestus of Venus would not have spanned their waists; but the *ampleur des pudiques charmes* of the Armenian ladies is no fault with Orientals. The Armenians have a neat church

* Kulb-dog, a Persian epithet of abuse.

and burial-ground, and a school for the education of their children, instituted by that most eccentric character Wolff, the converted Jewish missionary.

The kaleoons we smoked at Bushire were superlatively fine; I thought them far superior to the celebrated "nargilahs" of Baghdad. Persian tobacco is, beyond all comparison, the best in the world, so mild, that the most delicate lady may imbibe it without experiencing the least unpleasant effect, whilst its flavour is most delicious. Why it is not smoked instead of the poisonous trash which the "Ducks" use in their hookahs at Bombay, is to me an enigma, for its cost is trifling, a constant communication is kept up between the two ports, and the import duty not worth mentioning.

I have alluded to the impressive effect produced by the muezzins* calling the people to prayer, and proclaiming the time of wor-

* The priest is so called who, among the Turks and Persians, cries the hour of prayer from the top of the mosques or minarets.

ship from the mosque. The solemn, sonorous cry of "Ullah Ukbar!" God is great, thundered over the house tops at the stillest hour of morn, gives one an idea of some superior being calling man to rouse himself from his lethargy, and to contemplate that period when

"He and time must part for ever."

It may be owing to the novelty of the scene, but I certainly thought this a more impressive mode of calling the attention of the multitude to "*res sacræ*," than our own custom of tolling bells.

During the period we remained here, the all-engrossing topic of conversation turned towards the coming of the Russians. The Armenians devoutly wished for the annexation of the whole country to Russia, as they would then be thought more of than they ever can be under a Mahommedan government. They well know that the Muscovites have supplanted us in the favour of the shah, and that they contemplate the occupation of every town

of Persia, and are determined by every means in their power to expel, not only our public officers, but every man bearing the name of an Englishman, from that country. Indeed, our influence is at present limited to Southern Persia only. When they do advance, it will, of course, be from the most innocent and *disinterested* motives—the emperor has so great a regard for these Asiatic Christians that he must give them his powerful protection. The sooner they come the better, as the promotion in the Bombay army generally, and in my regiment in particular, is wretchedly slow; and these *gallant* Russians will surely not allow all the Armenian damsels to embrace Islamism, or consign their pursy fathers to “cold obstruction,” and perpetual oblivion in the withering shade of Persian despotism!

But, in seriousness, we really should keep a sharp look out towards that quarter. Sir John Malcolm used to say, and with great truth, that the danger was from Russia establishing such an influence over Persia, as would enable her to use Asiatic states as aids

and instruments in the invasion of British India. He did not *then* mean to say the danger was proximate, but simply that we should never cease to contemplate it as possible, and, without incurring any unnecessary expense, should suit our means of defence to those of eventual attack.

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CHAPTER VI.

Russian Ambition—The Russian Army—Army of India—Bengal Sepoys—The Persian Route to India—Policy of Persia—The Persian Army—Route to India—State of Khorasaun—Advance of the Russians—Probable Disasters—Koordish Allies—Route of the Oxus—Dismissed Sepoys—Passes and Defiles of Cashmere—Approach to our Indian Frontiers—Our Defensive Positions—The Indian Army.

HAVING in the first volume of this work cursorily alluded to the subject of an invasion of our Indian empire by Russia, I now shall submit to the reader some observations on that most interesting and vital topic, a portion of which, shortly after the termination of my overland journey, in the year 1830, I presented to the Earl of Clare, when his lordship was at the head of the government of the presidency to which I have the honour to belong. It is not so much my intention to discuss the probability of an invasion by Russia, connected as it is so intimately with the politics of

Europe, as to refer to the practicability of such an occurrence. If such an expedition is ever undertaken, we may be assured it will not be set on foot until that bold and wily government, which never sleeps, is prepared to execute whatever ambitious design it might contemplate ; we may therefore safely assume that, if the attempt be made, it will be with all necessary preparations and due provision of warlike *materiel*.

The first and most important point is, to know one's enemy. How many victories have been gained by the weaker power, solely from the presumption or ignorance of its more powerful opponent. Now, as our struggle would be for existence as well as empire, we ought to leave nothing to chance, but correctly calculate the means opposed to the threatened attack. Whether the sepoy of British India could stand against the Russian soldier, can only be decided by considering the physical powers of both. Of the latter I will now speak ; and the

comparison between him and the former, I shall leave to my brother officers of the native infantry regiments to draw.

To calculate the amount of the Russian *disposable* army is extremely difficult. If we were to give credence to the reports published upon the Continent under the direct authority of the cabinet of St. Petersburg, we should conclude that its strength was prodigious. A few years ago, nine hundred thousand men were quoted as being ready to take the field. But one simple fact will reduce the calculation in a marvellous degree. When Bonaparte advanced to the ancient capital of the Muscovites, with one hundred and thirty thousand men, he outnumbered all the forces which the emperor Alexander could bring against him. The Russian army did not certainly exceed ninety thousand men—there were, perhaps, fifty thousand men on the Turkish and Persian frontiers; and, assuredly, the maximum was not in excess of one hundred and fifty thousand fighting men. During the last

campaign against the Ottoman Porte, however, their exertions were more considerable: in the year 1829, many Russian officers *admitted* to me, that they had lost seventy thousand men, and, during the following year, nearly double that number fell. The grand army of the Balkan amounted to about forty-five thousand infantry and cavalry, which in less than a year was reduced to a moiety of that number. We may, therefore, safely estimate the whole force employed in this most unjust and aggressive war at two hundred and fifty-five thousand men: to which may be added the army of the Araxes, under Field Marshal Paskewitch Erivanski, amounting to about ten thousand more. They have thus a force of two hundred and sixty-five thousand men. Russia could not muster another soldier to send into the field. To effect even the present numerical force, the whole empire was so entirely denuded of troops, that, had the Polish insurrection *then* occurred, that ancient kingdom might *now* have been independent.

If France and England combined against Russia, how many Muscovite troops could be spared for such a distant field of operations as British India? But, let us see of what kind of stuff they are made. The passive and iron valour of the infantry, the rapid and skilful movements of its irregular cavalry, are terms of renown earned in many a bloody field. Frederick the Great said of them, what was repeated of us at Waterloo, "I may kill but cannot defeat them." When, at Austerlitz, the Duke of Dalmatia's able movements divided the forces of the czar, Sir Walter Scott says, "a division of the Russian guards made a desperate attempt to restore the communication—the French infantry were staggered; but while the Russians were in disorder from their success, Bessieres and the Imperial guard advanced—the encounter was desperate, and the Russians displayed the utmost valour before they, at length, gave way to the discipline and steadiness of French veterans. Their loss was twenty thousand men. Again, at Eylau, the French

had the advantage in numbers. Two strong columns advanced to turn the Russian right and storm their centre; they were driven back by the heavy fire of the Russian artillery. The Russian infantry stood like stone ramparts—they repulsed the enemy—their cavalry came to their support—pursued the retiring assailants, and took both standards and eagles.” Again, “a French regiment of cuirassiers had gained an interval in the Russian army, but were charged by the Kossacks, and only eighteen were saved.” After this tremendous battle, when the loss of the Russians was computed at twenty thousand, and that of the French at considerably more, the Russian general was entreated by his officers to renew the action next day, but, having exhausted his ammunition and provisions, he retreated.

Let us follow them up to Borodino. Both armies were about one hundred and twenty thousand strong. No action was ever more keenly contested, or at so murderous an expenditure of human life. The French carried

the redoubts, but the Russians rallied under the very line of their enemy's fire, and again advanced to the combat. Regiments of raw peasants, who till that day had never seen war, formed with the steadiness of veterans, and, uttering their national exclamation of "Gospodee pomilominos!" God have mercy upon us, rushed into the thickest of the battle, where the survivors, without feeling either fear or astonishment, closed their ranks over their comrades as they fell: while, supported alike by their enthusiasm and sense of predestination, life and death seemed alike indifferent to them. The Russians were ordered to retreat, but so little were they broken that, after the battle, they buried their slain comrades, and carried away their wounded at leisure.

This, then, is the enemy we may very shortly have to meet, either on the banks of the Indus, or nearer to the shores of the Persian Gulf. But, to assist our judgment still more, let us hear what several experienced British officers, who saw them more

recently at Adrianople, under very great disadvantages, say regarding them. "The strictest discipline prevailed amongst them. The infantry regiments were reduced from three thousand to seven hundred men, so great was the mortality: they made forced marches, carrying sixteen days' bread, marching twelve hours a-day in a burning sun, (north latitude 41° to 43° , about the same as the Oxus); they afterwards suffered dreadfully from sickness—from five to seven hundred sick at once; the cavalry men were very sickly; the horses in good working condition; the appointments rough, but in perfect order. The mortality was frightful, owing to the disgraceful state of the commissariat and medical departments: so much were they in need of good surgeons, that many Russian officers consulted the pasha's doctor, who was a notorious quack."

Now, for the state of the commissariat: "there were loud complaints against the commissary-general, who was accused of selling the wholesome provisions received from Rus-

sia, and serving out inferior," (this I know to be a common practice). Again: "Previously to leaving Adrianople the soldiers had been repeatedly without food, and for a fortnight had not tasted wine or spirits, though these liquors were sold for a farthing a pint." The Russian rations are described by the Honourable Major Keppel, as being a small quantity of meat twice a week, biscuit of the worst description, and a little oatmeal. Sir James, then Captain, Alexander, says, black bread and salt, with a portion of spirits, daily. This intelligent officer draws the following comparison between the English and Russian soldier. "The evolutions are performed with precision, but not with the rapidity of English manœuvres. The cavalry move slowly compared with the impetuosity of British dragoons; but the Russian horse-artillery are inferior to none. The common soldiers are patient under fatigue and privation, and, from their submission to their superiors, they, without hesitation, follow wherever led, and unflinchingly will stand

exposed to the severest fire. Still, in physical strength and reckless gallantry, they are inferior to our troops." Sir James Alexander might likewise have added, that they are far inferior to us (and to the French also, of course) in military tactics. Of the Don Kossacks, Sir Walter Scott remarks, "As light cavalry they are unrivalled; they and their horses have marched one hundred miles in twenty-four hours without halting: with them in front, no Russian army can be liable to surprise; in charging, they spread out like a fan, uttering their 'hourra,' each man acting individually. Their devotion to their officers is quite proverbial, and forms a most valuable trait in the character of the Russian soldier; he looks up to his commanding officer as a second father."

From these extracts, therefore, it is pretty clear that the Russian soldier is a tough sort of *materiel*—of iron valour, patient of fatigue, capable of subsisting on the coarsest food, and enthusiastically devoted to his own officers. The light cavalry is unrivalled; the

light artillery is inferior to none; while the heavy cavalry is only not so alert as the British.—Here, therefore, is a military force which, if only supported by corresponding attention on the part of the government to the efficiency of its medical and commissariat departments, would be truly formidable. Be the state of information among the subordinate grade of its officers what it may, the general staff of the army has never been wanting in military skill, and many departments are, we know, particularly effective.

The defects above noticed would, of course, be of serious importance on such an extensive line of operations, should they still remain uncorrected. The nearer the army approached the Indus, the more irreparable would be its diminished efficiency from ill-regulated supplies: its energies would be cramped by the increase of, and necessary provision for, its ineffective men; few of whom would ever so far recover as to be reported fit for duty. From the unskil-

fulness of the medical department, whose practitioners are all quacks, the sickness that would exist in the force may be easily imagined. The countries through which it would march are chiefly pastoral, or producing grain far different to what the soldier has been accustomed ; his diet must, of necessity, be greatly changed : this and the effects of climate would sweep off thousands. Upon the whole, therefore, when we recollect the revolt on the accession of the present Czar at St. Petersburg, the consequences of a stagnation of trade in the Baltic and Black Seas, the troops required on the Swedish and Turkish frontiers, with those in the occupation of Poland, we may conclude that, without a single violation by *us* of Russian territory, few troops could be spared for aggression by *her*—far less the numerous and efficient army that so great an enterprise would imperatively demand.

I have shewn above, that the supply of two hundred and sixty-five thousand men for the war with Turkey comprised a total

muster of the disposable force. Now, with so many other defensive cares demanding her most serious attention, a few thousands of these only could be considered really available—and a few thousands on such a base of operations, we should laugh at.

The present strength of the army of India, including the Queen's and the Honourable East India Company's European troops, amounts to about two hundred thousand men. Of these, twenty thousand are British soldiers, drilled and disciplined in a first-rate style. Indeed, I may safely assert in this place, *en passant*, that the grand reviews in Hyde Park, although composed of picked corps and surrounded with so much "pomp and pageantry," are not better parades than we lately had at Poonah, under the immediate command of that highly distinguished cavalry officer, Major General Sleigh, C. B.

As of the above number the native troops form the great mass of the Indian army, let us hear what the late Sir John Malcolm says of them:—

“ The Bengal sepoys that were engaged in the attack of the French lines at Cuddalore behaved nobly,—it was one of the first times that European troops and the disciplined natives of India met at the bayonet. The high spirit and bodily vigour of the rajpoots of the provinces of Bahar and Benares (the class of which three-fourths of the army was then composed) proved fully equal to the contest. In a partial action which took place in a *sortie* made by the French, the latter were defeated with severe loss ; and the memory of the event continues to be cherished with just pride both by officers and men of the Bengal native army. Had the result of this affair and the character of these sepoys been more generally known, some of our countrymen would have been freed from that excessive alarm which was entertained for the safety of our Eastern possessions. I trust that every event that can seriously disturb the peace of our Indian empire is at a great distance ; but if an European army had crossed the Indus, I should not tremble

for its fate. I well know that the approach of such a force would strike no terror into the minds of the men of whom I am writing, and that acting with British troops, and led by British officers, they would advance with almost as assured a confidence of victory, against a line of well-disciplined Europeans, as against a rabble of their own untrained countrymen. They might fail, but they are too bold, and too conscious of their own courage and strength, ever to anticipate defeat."

Russia has the choice of two grand routes by which she can advance upon British India; the one is by Persia, the other by the Oxus or Amoo*, as it is called by the na-

* I am just informed that Lieutenant Wood, of the Indian navy, who is attached to Sir Alexander Burnes's important mission to Cabool, has discovered the source of this river, which rises amongst the mountains in Sirikool, at an elevation of fifteen thousand feet above the level of the sea, from a lake which is encircled by mountains on every side except the western, through which it finds a channel. This lake has been named "Lake Victoria" by Sir Alexander Burnes and Lieutenant Wood.

tives. The region north of the Paropamisian ranges would be the best base of military operations ; but to enter into detail must far exceed the limits assigned to this chapter. I shall, therefore, take a general sketch only of the difficulties to be surmounted. The Persian route would, of course, be much influenced by the state of Persian feeling. Although the force which Persia *hostile* could bring into the field would be held in utter contempt, still the dangers of keeping open the communication, the annihilation of small detachments, and the difficulty of obtaining supplies, would be sufficient to render the success of any army passing through her provinces extremely doubtful. Our naval supremacy in the Black Sea would also tend to augment the number of difficulties in a superlative degree. With the Persian army officered by us after the manner of our extra battalions in India, and a few ships of war cruising in the Black Sea, the security of this base of Russian operations would be in too great a jeopardy for the most deluded

autocrat to hazard his army so far from the limits of his sway. The Persian province of Azerbijaun, which borders the southern frontiers of Russian Armenia, is by far the most productive one in Persia ; Mazanderaun and Astrabad, on the south-western shore of the Caspian (now a Russian lake), are also exuberant in their vegetation. Russia would endeavour to grasp at these provinces ; and, if successful, they would become the base of all future operations. Let us suppose that this was accomplished : indeed, it may be said that she has already seized the frontier province—also that the Russian *corps diplomatique* has advanced *pas à pas* some hundred miles towards India, and that the Russian army is close behind them. Let us now fancy a British force marching through the most favourable country. The Russian reserves concentrate their detached posts, and are left dependent on themselves : the Persians are their enemies ; the best “ tooffunchees,” or irregulars, are inhabitants of these very provinces ; communication being

at all times kept up with difficulty, and without a single action even, between the opposing armies, we can easily imagine how great would be the despondency arising from the unknown nature of the dangers the enemy was advancing to meet, the certainty of destruction in case of failure, and the prospect of annihilation to all stragglers. Thus far the picture is not very pleasing. When, again, we remember that the Ukraine for cattle and grain, and the Krimea for camels, are among the chief sources on which the Russians could place any reliance, and the interception of the means of transporting such supplies by our men of war, we may be permitted to add this to the general account of distress and hardship under which the Russians would be suffering.

During their terrible march, the mortality amongst the cattle would be immense; for, if that mortality was sufficient to block up the roads with carcasses in the comparatively short march of the Russian army through Roumelia, in the year 1830, where the roads

were excellent and the forage plentiful, what might not be expected to occur when it reached the extensive wilds of Khoras-saun ?

I shall here state a fact or two relative to Persia and its resources. For a very long period, our Indian governments continued deaf to all the entreaties for assistance of the late king and his son Abbas Mirza, which entreaties were accompanied by reiterated assurances, that if we longer withheld from them our support, their kingdom would fall into the hands of Russia. For many years, my lamented friend, Major Hart, was the only commissioned officer permitted to remain in the service of the Persians ; and although several officers of the " local army " offered to relinquish their allowances for permission to join him, for the purpose of organising the Persian troops on the Persian frontiers, our Indian government would not accede to their requests. It was only subsequently to the demise of Major Hart, that the supreme government of India consented to

grant the Persians a few officers; and when the order reached Bombay, none *above* the rank of subalterns were allowed to proceed to Persia, and even this grade was limited to two or three officers, who possessed the greatest interest at head-quarters. It was *then*, and not at the present crisis, that we should have lent Persia such support as would have rendered her independent of Russia, and, by the adoption of a determined line of policy in all our relations, have inspired *her* with that degree of confidence in *us* as would have prevented her falling into the snares her more wily friends prepared for her: notwithstanding, however, our sins of commission and omission, if the Persians will best consult their own real interests, they will yet cling to us; for, should they eventually join Russia, their kingdom is irretrievably lost.

I have mentioned that the only regular Persian army was organised by his royal highness prince Abbas Mirza, under the immediate command of Major Hart. The

present available forces of Persia amount to about fifty thousand men; all the other troops within the empire in excess of this number are "tooffunchees," who would rise only in case of the actual invasion of their own native districts, and are not to be depended on as a means of direct resistance to Russia. But the scarcity of supplies throughout the country itself is scarcely credible. Even the shah himself has often found it next to an impossibility to provide for the wants of his own party, when moving from one part of the empire to another; and such is the extreme difficulty of procuring forage, provisions, &c. that, when Colonel Sir John Macdonald Kinneir last journeyed (during the summer of 1826) from Bushire to the court of Teheraun, his Persian meh-maundar was obliged to send in advance to the several villages through which he intended to pass, to give intimation of the approach of the mission. Between *hostile Persia* and *acquiescent Persia*, these are among the principal difficulties to be antici-

pated. But, let us consider this latter hypothesis.

The Volga and the Caspian would be the line of communication between Russia and Astrabad. Here, no opposition could possibly be offered. From the position of Astrabad, it would form the grand depôt and base from which all the operations of Russia must emanate. Hence to India the road would strike direct through the cities of Meshed and Herat (both of which are situated on the eastern side of the Persian empire) to Cabool. The distance between Astrabad and Meshed is about three hundred and fifty miles; thence to Herat, one hundred and ninety*; Herat to Cabool five hundred and ten; and Cabool to Attock one hundred and fifty: making a grand total of twelve hundred miles†. The daily march for a

* Kafilahs perform the distance from Meshed to Herat in a week or eight days, including a couple of halts on the road.

† I am inclined to believe that I have over calculated the above distances, and that when these countries are

camel is thirty miles under a weight of six hundred and forty pounds. Now, as nearly the whole army would be composed of infantry and heavy artillery, with various kinds of carriages, ploughing through a country where wheels have never yet rolled, I scarcely think the Russian force could proceed on an average as much as ten miles per diem. Hence, it appears that it would take one hundred and twenty days on its march, if even it met with no other than natural obstacles to arrest its progress. But there are many difficulties on this route also: the immense distance through a territory without roads, the scarcity of supplies, and the resistance of the natives. Mr. Fraser says, that the proportion of cattle to men when he travelled in Khorasaun, was one hundred and fifty mules to one hundred and

better known to us, they will be found in excess of the correct number of miles. Major Rennel and Sir John Macdonald Kinneir estimate the distance between Delhi and Astrabad at nineteen hundred miles. It cannot, however, be so great.

forty men. The Honourable Mountstuart Elphinstone's proportion when on his important mission to Cabool, was six hundred camels and twelve elephants to a party of seven hundred and fifty individuals. To form an idea of the prodigious number of cattle that would be required, we must remember that *they* depended on the country for their ordinary supplies; a Russian force must depend on *itself*: therefore, a camel for every two men would be absolutely required, independently of the cattle for the transport of military stores. We all know that the distracted state of Khorasaun is such, that the tribes raise no more grain than is just sufficient for their own consumption. So long as grain is in the ground, the chiefs *profess* the greatest fealty to the shah, but no sooner is it stowed safely in their granaries, than they resume their independent tone, convinced that even should an army be sent against them, it would be starved into a retreat!

The district of Astrabad, in which the grand depôt for the Russian army would be

situated, is described by Fraser (always critically accurate) as surprisingly rich; but the great quantity of rain that falls and stagnates in the impervious forests, during the summer months, renders that district peculiarly unhealthy. Indeed an epidemic prevails, not only in this part of Mazanderaun, but all along the western shore of the Caspian. Hence to Meshed the road lies along the Elbourz mountains. Although the country is here proverbially prolific, the eternal incursions of the Toorkomauns has rendered it a desert. To use Mr. Fraser's own words, when speaking of the apprehended advance of the Russian army into India, "the short, and easiest route for any such force, would be by ascending the pass leading to Bostaun, by which, after a march of three or four days through morasses and forests, and then ascending a steep defile, the country becomes open, and, except a few rocky defiles, the road to Herat would be found tolerably good: but much of the country would be entirely desert, and still more but

scantly inhabited. The remainder of the route to Cabool is of the same character, with occasional fertile spots, but altogether incapable of supplying any considerable force with sufficient provisions." Mr. Elphinstone describes the hilly country at the foot of the Paropamisian chain as tolerably fertile, but to the south it sinks into the bare, sandy desert. However, once arrived at Cabool, provisions are cheap, and fruit abundant, horses for remount procurable, and forage plentiful. As the climate is most genial, and as all the rivers towards the Indus are fordable at the proper season, this city is the very position the Russians look to for reorganizing their forces previously to encountering the combined armies of India. Of the countries to be travelled over, it is necessary to mention, that although sufficient grain is produced for the consumption of the inhabitants, any sudden or unusual demand could not possibly be supplied.

On these important contingencies, therefore, although Russian influence might provide for

them, it is pretty certain that, if even every intervening tribe were apparently friendly, this feeling would directly proceed from fear of the invading force, which if eventually unsuccessful would have but little mercy shewn to it. Whenever the trumpet sounded the retreat it would be no better than a confused rout, as every moment's delay would increase the number of enemies:—the utmost consternation would prevail—the retreating army would be dispersed and entirely dependent upon the country for its supplies, which if not voluntarily tendered would be taken by force—the countless hordes of central Asia would become desperate, and an indiscriminate massacre would ensue.

To provide against such a stroke of adverse fortune, it would be necessary to establish points of communication, and magazines; to effect this on an advanced line of twelve hundred miles would alone require no inconsiderable force, and however friendly the tribes might seem *at first*, the constant demands of these detachments on

their limited resources would sensibly diminish their zeal. Club law would be resorted to, and the "chabook" applied to all reluctant purveyors of supplies, which would at once rend asunder the feeble bonds that had attached them to the invaders, and produce revolt. That the invaders in their advance would be joined by various tribes is quite certain:—a Koord of rank and intelligence (Beder Khan) told Mr. Fraser that so discontented were the tribes, that if a thousand men of any European nation were to make their appearance, from whatever quarter, Russia, France or England, they would be joined by twenty thousand Koords. Now, I think, this would greatly embarrass them, for they must either look to the Russians for supplies, or subsist by plundering the whole line of country through which they passed, (this they would partially do at any rate), but either way I think their presence might tend only to increase the difficulties of the Russian commander-in-chief. The personal oppo-

sition from the inhabitants themselves, appears a trifle in the scale of considerations. The Afghauns are so scattered that they would be incapable of offering any serviceable resistance.

On a review of the preceding remarks, it is evident that although the difficulties to be surmounted are excessive, yet under certain contingencies, even by this route, it is not an impossibility that a Russian army should reach the banks of the river Indus.

The second route by which the Russians could advance upon our Indian possessions, is that of the Oxus. The more closely we consider the state of anarchy and confusion in which all the tribes occupying the banks of that river now are, the more obvious must it appear that this line is the easiest of accomplishment, and, therefore, demands our especial notice. In fact, no obstacles whatever exist to prevent these countries being invaded, retained, and made a base for all future operations. A few armed steamers are only required on the river, and the

whole might be accomplished; and, we have practical proof before us of the ease with which these may be put together in the late important expedition to the Euphrates under that most indefatigable officer Colonel Chesney, of the royal artillery. The line of communication, certainly, extends for five hundred miles; but, what is this distance when the navigation of the Oxus is secured, and with it the absence of all danger of interception?

Moreover, on the eastern shore of the Caspian Sea, there happens to be two good bays—Balkan, and Mangushluck. The distance from the former to Khivah, which would be the point of embarkation on the Oxus, is about three hundred and fifty miles over a flat desert, in which there is a scarcity of water. General Mouravief, a late Russian envoy, has actually *over-rated* the distance, and magnified the difficulties to a much greater extent than exists. This anomaly cannot easily be accounted for. However, Lieutenant-colonel Sir Alexander

Burnes admits the route to be sufficiently hazardous.

The distance from Mangushluck, is only two hundred and fifty miles, and although there may not be a plentiful supply of water, yet, caravans effect the passage, and the wandering Illyautts pasture their flocks and herds throughout the entire route. Mangushluck is the *passe par tout* which Russia is so anxious to secure, as it is not more than a few hours sail from Astrakhan—say fifty hours.

With such a noble river as the Volga, on which deeply laden vessels can be navigated from the very heart of the Russian empire, to the port of Mangushluck, there is absolutely nothing at all in the way to prevent the most perfect equipment of an invading army, especially as the Kalmuck Tartars in the neighbourhood, who are so entirely dependant on Russia, would most willingly supply all the requisite cattle.

The military force to be overcome on reaching Khivah, only amounts to fifty

thousand wretchedly armed men who are a mere rabble, so that its conquest would be simple enough ; indeed, I have every reason to believe that the Russians maintain a tolerably good understanding with the Khivians, as they have fifteen thousand serfs there already, besides as many more at Bokhara ; but even admitting their hostility, let us hear Mr. Fraser's opinion on the matter :—" There is little doubt that the Russians might with common management not only conquer, but retain possession of Khivah, and project and prepare for ulterior enterprises." According to the present line of Russian policy the attempt will be immediately made. Sir Alexander Burnes, whose authority is the very first we now possess on the subject, distinctly says, that the military force of Khivah, is quite insufficient to resist any determined effort of Russia. To sum up all, therefore, come when they please, the Russians, thus far, will have few other obstacles to encounter than the usual incon-

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veniences attending the passage of a small desert.

Moreover, beyond Khivah, and along the banks of the river Amoo, there are no towns of any strength or consequence. General Mouravief says, that the passage for laden boats from Khivah to the neighbourhood of Bulkh is accomplished in about ten or twelve days. A few gun boats stationed at different points on the river, would secure the communication from Khivah to Koondooz. Sir Alexander Burnes says, "it is navigable from Oorgunge to near Koondooz; its channel is straight, free from impediments; bed firm and sandy; is *never* fordable. In its floods it covers and fertilizes several miles on each bank; its lowest breadth is four hundred yards; about a month after its greatest rise the velocity was six thousand yards per hour. The river is occasionally frozen over annually above Koondooz, and below Khivah. The boats are flat bottomed, and built of a particular kind of wood which grows in abundance on the banks, and requires no

seasoning before use; their burthen twenty tons, draught one foot when laden." But if both wood and supplies were scarce, what is there to prevent an exportation from Russia of every thing the force might require? Thus far, there is absolutely nothing to diminish the efficiency of the soldier—Bokhara is proverbially healthy, and Budukshaun an earthly Elysium. On this line the Russians would have the field entirely to themselves, as we know little or nothing of these countries, nor their inhabitants, and should, therefore, be utterly incapable of offering any effectual resistance. Monsieur Jacquemont says, " Nothing in fact, is so practicable, as the march of a large European army with its *matériel* from Toplis to Delhi, and it would have the choice of three different roads by which it might debouch in three columns upon India."

Having briefly examined the ground which the Russians have long since surveyed for their own purposes, and over which they most probably would march on their way to

India, I shall now probe the vulnerability of our frontiers from this direction. Timour entered Hindoostaun from Toorkistaun in three columns—the first was directed on Mooltaun; the second, by Bulkh, Cabool, and Peshawaur to Attock; the third, by Samarcand, towards Cashmere. It is not very long since a plan was handed to the sovereign of Russia for sending a force to Cashmere, *via* Bokhara. The projector calculated on the Russians being joined by the discontented from every part of India, and he certainly calculated correctly; for, doubtless, any invading army may be certain of having thousands of *our own* dismissed sepoy (all ready drilled) the moment it approaches our Indian possessions. I am, really, afraid to quote the number of dismissals *per annum*, from the three armies of India; but since our late Governor-general Lord William Bentinck's "untoward" act—that of abolishing corporal punishment throughout the *native* army, the number has been prodigious from the Bombay presidency *alone*.

Colonel Evans says, there are several passes between Bulkh and Cabool, which run close along the sides of rivers, and there is likewise a defile from Koon-dooz to Cashmere. There is much snow throughout these passes in May, but by the middle of June all is clear, and the heat rather great. It cannot, however, (as I know from personal experience) be more oppressive than it is in Russia at the same period of the year. The defiles lead between perpendicular heights, varying from two to three thousand feet, and are so tortuous that they often form distinct inclosures like fortified positions. The valleys are all stored with grain and fruit. The Russians look to Cashmere from a knowledge that the moment they take it, they possess the key of the British Indian empire. Of this there cannot be a doubt. To effect it, they would, as a matter of course, seize Budukshaun, which is bounded in part by Kafferistaun, extending towards the north of Cashmere.

The description by Mr. Elphinstone of

this highly interesting country, is very similar to the present state of Koordistaun. The whole region is mountainous, and broken into small valleys of extreme fertility, which produce an abundance of fruit, and pasture numerous flocks and herds. The hills are covered with goats, and great attention is paid to the cultivation of wheat and millet. The roads, which are only fit for foot soldiers, are interrupted by mountain torrents, crossed by means of the trunks of trees tied together and slung over them by leathern ropes, removable at pleasure. The inhabitants are well armed with bows and poisoned arrows, swords and matchlocks, and the plan of attacking an enemy is precisely similar to that of the Koordish.

These being the passes leading to our frontiers, I shall now return to the neighbourhood of Kooloom, where, while one division of the Russian army would concentrate for the passage to Cabool, a second would descend to Peshawaur, and a third to Cashmere.

To effect this, the natural obstacles, although great, would give way to the talent of experienced military commanders.

It may here be asked, what we have been about all this time. The answer is simple enough. We should have heard for the hundredth time that the Russians are approaching the Oxus, but we should have no certain information of the nature of their movements. We should depute officers not from their public services, but their *private* interest at head quarters* on special missions to the Cabool princes, for the purpose of soliciting them to form a coalition with us, and we should find them full of *le savoir faire*, and unmeaning professions, but not at all

* A friend of mine asked one of our Indian governors for an appointment. "Pray, Sir," said the governor, "what parliamentary interest do your relations in England possess?"—"None," replied the old officer. "Then I can do nothing for you," rejoined the great man. This equals the speech of a late commander-in-chief at Madras, who said to Colonel * * * *, "Don't talk to me of your services; I came here to advance my friends, and them *only* will I serve."

inclined to allow us to throw any troops into their territories. We should fritter away months in negotiation, and thus give them time to make defensive preparations. We should then, perhaps, reach the banks of the Indus with the combined armies of India, headed by officers of the Royal army, *of course*, who notwithstanding their great skill, might by some chance or other leave Cashmere to its own native ruler, and send a few regiments in observation on the Upper Indus. Meanwhile the Russian army disposed *en échelon* advances towards Attock—determined not to be drawn into any serious engagement, but demanding our closest attention. The Russian commander-in-chief hears of the arrival of a division of his grand army in Cashmere, which meets with little resistance, as the natives are no soldiers, and when we are dreaming of being suddenly attacked, he makes a *détour* to his left, on the pass to Cashmere. Our commander-in-chief observing this movement, orders every disposable corps to penetrate that country,

but finds the Russians have overreached him. All our defensive preparations on the left bank of the Indus become useless, and as we know not by which pass into Cashmere the Russian general enters, we are obliged to maintain an immense force at a ruinous expense, whilst the Muscovites are amusing us by their demonstrations *pour passer le tems*, and, “pendente lite,” their spies and emissaries instigate every disaffected court in India to join in one simultaneous rise against us.

Without the delay of another day we should take possession of the fortress of all India, Cashmere: it is notorious that the Russians are, and have been for many years past, creeping cautiously along to attain their grand objects in the East, persuaded that the game is well worth the expenditure of some powder and shot; but *we* instead of checking their onward course of encroachment by a well-timed and spirited remonstrance, use a conciliatory and even *patronising* policy, and actually wait their convenience to throw off the mask. *Cui bono?*

To what good will all this tend? A quarrel must take place sooner or later, unless we anticipate it by measures which would render it unsafe for Russia to continue her advance. Although the British government so strongly suspects her, it will not confess its conviction how completely it is tricked by the insidious and *politique* cabinet of the Autocrat.

I repeat, that if our possessions in India are worth the holding, we should fling off our usual dilatoriness, and at once take post in Sind, the Paunjaub and Cashmere; and we should do well to benefit by the remark which the emperor Ukbar made—"From early antiquity," said he, "Cabool and Candahar have been accounted the gates of Hindoostaun, one affording entrance from Turan, and the other from Iran, and if both places are properly guarded, the extensive empire of Hindoostaun is safe from the irruptions of foreigners."

Our present frontier is radically bad, leaving as it does a strong and fertile country in the hands of untried friends, who

at this moment sustain a force that might become hostile to us when it would be rather *inconvenient*, to say the least of it. Sind would be a very desirable acquisition: it produces abundance of grain, and numerous flocks, herds, and camels. In referring to the already published accounts of the Punjaub, we find that an army of eighty thousand men has been maintained at Lahore, from the neighbouring resources. The revenues of Cashmere at present exceed forty lacks of rupees—under us they would amount to a crore. Sir Alexander Burnes distinctly states, that an enemy, native or European, if defeated in the plains, might defy, in the valley of Cashmere, every attempt at subjugation; since it could subsist without foreign aid in a natural fortress that might be rendered impregnable. It is, therefore, quite clear that for the successful defence of the empire of India, we must negotiate with Runjeet Sing for the province of Cashmere and the fort of Attock. Possessing these places, the Russians in their

advance must confine themselves to an attempt at crossing the Indus. As a defensive position Attock seated on the high road to our frontiers, and being the usual ferry, might easily be held by us, though in its present state it is scarcely tenable. However, we might immediately establish quarters in its neighbourhood, where we could intrench ourselves and give the Russians some little amusement. We might also form a second cantonment near the branches of the Indus, at about five hundred miles from its *debouchure*, and a third at Hyderabad; these, with the main reserve northwest of Lahore, ready to advance at a moment's notice, would, as grand positions, be sufficient for the purpose.

At all events the Bombay army must soon advance towards the Indus, and secure the navigation of that noble river, for the conveyance of men and *matériel* to this frontier line, which must become the depot of *our* army; and we should also secure a facility of intercourse with the Bengal provinces, by

means of good roads, so that our generals may calculate on their movements with precision, and be enabled to detach their brigades, and concentrate them again according to circumstances. The construction of military roads would be grand and beneficial works for India ; and as they are indispensable, and must eventually be made between all our large frontier stations, why should such procrastination take place in their formation ? The whole military *matériel* throughout the army of India should be instantly assimilated, otherwise it would be useless “*flagrante bello*” to send stores from the arsenal in Bombay Castle up the Indus for the supply of the Bengal army.

I cannot enter further on the subject of our defensive positions, having no means of obtaining any positive and accurate knowledge of the superficies of those countries lying westward of our present positions. But I have endeavoured by an impartial consideration of the subject, to shew in as few words as possible, that it will be no easy

business for the Russians to bring to the banks of the Indus a force equal to the gigantic one we could concentrate there for the contest, (say ninety thousand picked troops, out of an army which even the Duke of Wellington has declared to be one of the finest he ever saw). We have little to fear *externally*, from any attempt at an invasion of the empire of India; retreat on either side would be certain destruction, nothing being realizable between the two alternatives:—of necessity a war with Russia on the frontiers of British India *must* be a war of mutual extermination!

CHAPTER VII.

Leave Bushire—Bahrain—Pearl-Banks of Bahrain—Abdul Wahab
—The Cassimees—Rahmah bin Jaubir—Rahmah's Tragical End
—His Family—Uttobee Tribes—Arab Pearl-Fishers—Bahrain
Pearls—Superstition—Fresh Water from the Salt Sea—Bahrain
Horses.

WE were detained at Bushire for nearly five weeks, before any opportunity offered for quitting the gulf; when by the kindness of Captain Wyndham of the Indian navy, we were most handsomely accommodated with a passage on board the "Amherst," a fine eighteen gun sloop of war. Towards the middle of September we embarked for sea, and on the following morning at day-light, there being a light breeze from off the land, weighed, and stood across the Gulf to Bahrain, with dispatches from Colonel Wilson, the political resident, for the sheikh of that place. The island is situated on the Arabian

side of the Persian Sea*, and has had so many masters, that it is rather odd our own government have never taken possession of it.

Bahrain fell with Ormus (anciently Harmozia) under the dominion of the Portuguese upwards of three hundred years ago. Those conquerors lost it to Shah Abbas, who was aided in his undertaking by a British squadron. A prince of Oman next possessed this island, and in his turn was ejected. Shah Tamasp restored it to Persia, but his death put an end to all his designs, and afforded an ambitious and enterprising Arabian a fair opportunity of gaining possession of the island, where his successors still maintain their authority.

* Arrian says, "Bahrain is a day and a night's sail from the mouth of the Euphrates, and is called Tylos." He adds, "it is very large and spacious, and not mountainous, but produces plenty of several sorts of fruits, pleasant and agreeable to the taste." (Rooke's Arrian, 8vo. London, 1814; Vol. ii. B. vii. c. 20, pp. 166, 167.)

Bahrain, so famous for its groves of palm and pearl-fisheries, even at the time when pearls were found on the banks of Ormus, Kishm, Karak, and many other islands in "Oman's dark-blue sea," has now become of great consequence, as *those* banks are exhausted, whilst the banks of Bahrain have suffered no sensible diminution. The fishing season commences in April or May, and terminates in October. The bank extends along the Arabian coast for about one hundred and fifty miles, and it is well known that wherever there is a shoal, the pearl oyster is sure to be found.

Until within the last few years, much interruption has been experienced by the divers, in consequence of the incursions of the "Cassimees," or "Joassimees," who are the maritime portion of a powerful sect of heretics that wrested Mecca from the sway of the "vicar of the prophet of God*."

* One of the titles of Sooltaun Mahmoud, as heir to the Kaliphate, and the successor of Mahommed.

Their founder was Abdul Wahab (the slave of the Most High), the son of Soolimaun, who was born in the Arabian province of Nejdjud. He conceived that the doctrines of the Korân had lost much of their purity by time and the interpretations of the ignorant; he accordingly asserted himself a divinely commissioned reformer of existing abuses. Driven from the city of Bassorah, and its neighbouring dependency of Zobair, where he had located himself, he returned to the desert, and, not satisfied with spiritual weapons alone, used those of the secular arm for the propagation of his new opinions. His son Mahommed followed his footsteps; his grandson Abdulazeez did the same, and most effectually contributed to that purpose. His conquests alarmed even the Ottoman Porte, and although several powerful armies were despatched against him, he could not be subdued. The pilgrimage to Mecca was interrupted; that holy city as well as Medina fell into his hands, and the attempts of Selim the Third, and of Mustapha

the Fourth, to restore the unity of Faith, and to crush an audacious rebel, were quite as futile as had been those of Abdul Hamid; but after the peace of Bucharest, the present Sooltaun turned his whole attention to these objects, and successfully attained them.

These Cassimees, or Joassimees, had always regarded the orders of the chief of this new sect as sacred: even British commerce was at their mercy, and their atrocities fully equalled those of the Algerine corsairs. They were further encouraged by finding that for several years no British squadron had been sent against them, which they had fully expected after their repeated refusals to accede to our treaties. In the year 1809, however, the Bombay government determined to suppress their piracies. An expedition of land and sea forces was sent to their stronghold under General, then Lieutenant-colonel, Lionel Smith, and Admiral Rowley, when they were partially put down. Three years after this, they reappeared to the number of at least eighty

boats, some carrying as many as three hundred armed men. They visited Kishm, Linga, Assaloo, and various other ports, taking them by force, and following up their conquests by rapine and murder.

The most successful and most generally tolerated pirate that, perhaps, ever infested any sea, was an Arab chieftain, by name Rahmah bin Jaubir. This butcher-chief escaped the vengeance of our expedition, for he was too knowing a fellow to insult the British flag ; and it was the policy of our own government to give no offence to the Wahabee power whom he served. Rahmah, like Ancient Pistol, exclaimed, " the world's mine oyster, which I with sword will open." He pirated for himself, and pocketed his booty. His thousand followers also squabbled for the loaves and fishes ; and as the greater number of these were his own bought slaves, and the rest, equally subject to his power and caprice, he was often as prodigal of their lives as of those of his enemies, who, even after submission, were

inhumanly tortured—some by impalement; and others by being embowelled. He once shut up a number of his own crew in a wooden tank in which he kept their fresh water, and threw them all overboard.

I was present at the last interview this bucanier had with the English. It was at Bushire, in the British residency, in the presence of that accomplished officer, General Sir Ephraim Stannus, who was then holding the high office of political resident in the Gulf of Persia. Rahmah's appearance was most ferocious. His shirt had not been changed from the time it was first put on; no trowsers covered his spindle shanks; a capacious woollen cloak, or *abbah*, encircled his shrivelled figure; and an old ragged *kefiâh*, or head-kerchief, with green and yellow stripes, was thrown over his head. His dry, sapless body was riddled with wounds, and his wizened face most fearfully distorted by *sabre* gashes and by the loss of an eye. His hands were long and narrow, like the claws of a bird of prey, and his left

arm had been shattered by cannister shot. The bone between the elbow and the shoulder being completely crushed in pieces, the fragments had worked themselves out, exhibiting the arm and elbow adhering to the shoulder by flesh and tendons alone. Notwithstanding this, he valued it from its useful properties; "For," said he, stretching out his long, ghastly finger, adorned with the only ornament he wore—a huge, silver-mounted seal-ring, engraved with Arabic characters, "I wish nothing better than the cutting off with my yambeeah *, as many heads as I can sever at one blow with my boneless arm."

This brutal corsair put to sea on a cruising expedition, accompanied by a fleet of Joassimee boats, which had also escaped the notice of our expedition. A desperate action was fought between Rahmah's fleet and the Uttobee Arabs of Bahrain, in which the

* A sharp poniard, or dagger, on whose blade is often engraven Arabic words, and sometimes very singular cabalistical inscriptions that cannot easily be deciphered.

former were signally victorious. Among numerous captures were two baghalahs bound to India, having on board several valuable Arabian horses for the Bombay government, on account of the stud-establishment of that presidency. These, he most carefully transhipped, and had them safely landed at Bombay. Subsequently, he cruised off Bahrain for the purpose of intercepting other Joassimee boats, which frequented that island for pearls, rice, and dates. In his action with them, he sank three, after taking out their cargoes; four he blew up for want of hands to man them; and the same number he brought into Bushire roads for sale. Having effected his object, he stood away to the southward, and continued cruising between the piratical port of Ras-ul-Khymah and the pearl-banks off Bahrain, pursuing his course of fearless, lawless rapine. No corner of this gulf was secure from his ravages: he swept from shore to shore, and passed from isle to isle with the force of the thunderbolt, and with the

speed of the lightning. He even threatened to attack both Bushire and Bassorah. A late British resident actually made preparations for the removal of his family to Shirauz, and Bushire itself was placed in a most efficient state of defence.

But here the corsair's career was destined to close. One fine morning, when the gray mists evaporated and left a clear line of horizon, it was suddenly broken by a little speck on the dark blue sea. Rahmah ordered the helmsman to bear up, and, the breeze freshening, soon came down on a heavy baghalah, and instantly stood stem on her, laid alongside, and prepared to board her on the gangway. When his intentions were questioned, the only reply he would give, or that could be distinguished by his antagonist, was, "What is that to you?" On rashly attempting to board, Rahmah's men were met on all quarters, and became completely overpowered by a superior numerical force. Hastily demanding of his crew, whether they would not perish by the annihilation

of their foes, and being answered by their war-cry in defiance, he rushed below, attached a match to his powder-barrel, returned on deck, and sprang upon the poop with his only son in his arms. The match ignited, and the vessels still firmly grappling, burst together into a thousand atoms, and were hurled through the air in the midst of a volcano of smoke and flames.—

“ And first one universal shriek there rush’d
Louder than the loud ocean, like a crash
Of echoing thunder; and then all was hush’d
Save the wild wind, and the remorseless dash
Of billows; but at intervals there gush’d,
Accompanied with a convulsive splash,
A solitary shriek,—the bubbling cry
Of some strong swimmer in his agony.”

When the frightful explosion had subsided, nothing was seen but a black cloud on the ocean, enveloping all around like a pall, and darkening the very sky. A few bubbles, and the trembling ripple of the sea were the only distinguishable trace of the combatants!

Thus terminated the career of a corsair who

had infested the Gulf of Persia for many years. He had even excited the attention of the Indian government in as great a degree as that of the Persian, whose efforts were too feeble to put down his squadron. His character and conduct were stained with the usual vices of his order. By exhibiting the ferocity of a robber, and the baseness of a traitor, he obtained all his power; and his unquenchable thirst for plunder effected his annihilation.

Rahmah bin Jaubir was the only surviving son of Jaubir bin Athbi, of the Arabian family of Yalahimah. His eldest brother, Abdallah, was barbarously murdered by a prince of Shirauz whilst residing under that Persian's protection. Shabaun died a natural death on his return from a pilgrimage to Mecca's holy shrine: and Mahommed was killed at Khore-Hassan in the defence of Shabaun's harem.

The family is a scion of the ancient stock of Uttobee conquerors of Bahrain, who originally came from Arabia, and intermar-

ried with three powerful tribes, of which the Beni Yalahimah is one. These three tribes united for mutual security, and for the purpose of resisting other powers. They became pastoral and nomadic, with the express understanding that the profits arising from their conjunctive occupations should be equally divided amongst the whole. Their governor was to be selected from the eldest tribe; the second (Yalahimah) was to furnish seamen; and the youngest to carry on the business of a commercial agency. This union worked well for nearly half a century, when the individuals forming the mercantile branch of the concern became anxious to trade on their own responsibility. With this determination, they artfully induced the others to allow them to send an accredited agent to the Bahrain pearl-banks, and, as their chief business lay in that quarter, to endeavour to purchase a share of the fishery, rather than to continue a system of barter for its produce.

The Yalahimah tribe readily granted a pas-

sage to their brethren free of all cost; and succeeded in their object beyond their most sanguine expectations. In due course of time the partnership was dissolved, and a peremptory refusal of a division of the acquired profits insisted on. A rupture ensued: each family commenced a harassing system of retaliation upon the other, until they openly avowed their determination to carry on hostilities both by sea and land. The Yalahimah being the weakest, were the greatest sufferers, and were nearly annihilated. The youngest were likewise much impoverished. The sheikh of Bahrain, jealous of the power and the prosperity of the eldest, who had located themselves near Zabarah, collected his forces, and unprovokedly attacked them; but, in the end, sustained a most signal defeat. Consequent upon this victory, the eldest tribe, elated by their successes, collected their boats, and suggested to their brethren the propriety of a general union. This they soon accomplished, and, proceeding to Bahrain, met with

such ineffectual resistance as to obtain possession of that valuable island without sustaining any great loss. They immediately began to open a trade for themselves, apportioned to one another grants of land, and even settled the exclusive rights of tenure: but the Yalahimah claimed a vote at the council board, which was indignantly refused.

They now immediately embarked, and left the island, cursing the deep injustice of such treatment; they determined, however, to make reprisals, and return blow for blow, come when or whence it might. From that very hour, they commenced the occupation of corsairs, which has been terminated only by the tragical end of Rahmah bin Jaubir.

To return from this digression to the valuable pearl-fisheries of Bahrain, it is to be remarked, that the Arabs, who are alone its fishers, pass the whole of their lives upon the bank. Their wives and children live on the island in cabins formed by the branches of the date, interwoven with reed. The population

is very limited. Their appearance and manners are precisely similar to all the maritime Arabs of the Arabian shore, with the exception of their stature, which is invariably tall and slender. They suffer from cutaneous diseases, and from inflammation of the eyes, which in its effects becomes as painfully distressing as the Egyptian ophthalmia. They never attain any great age, notwithstanding their habitual abstemiousness; and although they cultivate the beard, it is by nature weak, scanty, and soon turns gray. They wear no other covering than a cotton kerchief, girt around the loins by a number of small leathern thongs of the thickness of whipcord, made of buffalo hide, and of so lasting a nature as to endure the whole period of their lives. Their heads have no other shelter than that of an immense bush of hair anointed with fetid grease.

Their mode of diving to obtain the pearl oyster, is deserving of some notice. Having stripped, they seize hold of a

rope which is made fast to an outrigger projecting from the gunwale of the boat, and, with a basket slung around the neck by a thin cord, dive to the bottom, when they cast adrift the rope. Their descent is to a depth of forty feet, and they remain below the water for about a minute, during which time they collect nearly a dozen oysters, which they place into their basket and then ascend to the surface.

The pearls taken here are of two distinct kinds—white and yellow. The white are sent to Turkey and Europe, where they are more highly valued than even those from the Manar fishery off Ceylon, for these greatly deteriorate with age; the yellow, resembling the Japan pearl, are large and globular, and preserve their golden hue even after their rival has lost much of his lustrous appearance.

With regard to these pearls, Niebuhr says, that the irregularly shaped are taken to Constantinople and other parts of Turkey, where they are set in gold ornaments, or worked on rich velvets for the

ladies, whilst the perfect pearls are reserved for the Surat merchants, (in those days the wealthiest of the East), who send them throughout every part of India. He adds:—"The women have so strong a passion for this luxury, and the sale of the article is so much increased by superstition, that there is not the least reason to apprehend any diminution either in the price, or the demand. There are none of the Gentiles who do not make a point of religion to bore at least one pearl at the time of their marriage. Whatever may be the mysterious meaning of this custom among a people whose morality and politics are couched in allegories, or where allegory becomes religion, this emblem of virgin modesty, has proved advantageous to the pearl trade."

Tavernier, in his Travels, thus notices Bahrain:—"There is a pearl-fishery round the Island of Bahrain, which belongs to the shah of Persia, and there is a good fortress garrisoned with three hundred men. The water they use in this island, and also

on the Persian coast, is salt, and of a bad taste; and it is only the natives of the country that can drink it. With respect to strangers, it costs them a considerable sum to get it good, for they have to draw it from the sea, at a distance of from half a league to two leagues beyond the island. Those that go to fetch it are commonly five or six in a bark, from which one or two of them dive to the bottom of the sea, having a bottle or two hung at their girdle, which they fill with water, and then cork them tight; for, at about two or three feet from the bottom of the sea, the water is sweet, and of the very best quality. When those who are let down have filled their bottles, they pull a small cord, which has one end fastened to some person in the boat, and it serves as a signal for their comrades to draw them up."

These remarks on the subject of drawing fresh water from the salt sea, are quite correct. It is a fact, that fresh-water springs are met with on this bank, at a depth of at least

eighteen feet. The water is soft and sweet. I believe the same phenomenon is known to exist in the Bay of Xagua, at the mouth of the Rio de los Lagertos, off Yucatan, and also in the Gulf of Spezzia. It has been thought that these springs, rising at the bed of the ocean, as well as a heavy fall of rain, are favourable to the formation of the pearl. Be this as it may, the fishermen always calculate on a good season when they have had wet weather: indeed, the merchants pay them higher when there has been much rain.

The town of Bahrain is walled and flanked by a few towers, after the Arabian style of building, and seated near to the shore. A small suburb surrounds it, inhabited by the poorer classes, and the bank divers, who, by their fishing exertions, produce an annual amount of one hundred and fifty thousand pounds sterling. At one period, the island contained upwards of three hundred villages, but at present a few small hamlets only are to be met with, scattered about the most fertile spots, be-

neath shady date groves, and beside clear rills, and enjoying the advantage of a cool and not an unhealthy atmosphere. A Bahrain horse is proverbial for being as gentle as a pet lamb, but, when roused, is as fierce and as dreadful as the lion of the desert. The Arabs say, "Give us the Nejdjee for size, the Montifikh for symmetry, but the Bahrain for *gentility*."

CHAPTER VIII.

Leave Bahrain—Coast of Arabia—Narrow Escape—Storming of Ras-ul-Khymah—Cape Mussendom—Pirates—Expedition against the Corsairs—Attack of Ras-ul-Khymah—Fall of the Fort—Young Prisoners—Their Statement—Bassadore—Officers in India.

OUR *séjour* at Bahrain was limited to two short days, when we weighed and crept along the Arabian shore, with just enough of a fair breeze to lull the sails to sleep. We successively passed on our lee-beam Abothabee, the residence of Tanoun, a brave and enlightened Arab, and chief of the Beni-Yas tribe; then Shargah, belonging to a Joassimee, by name Sooltaun-bin-Suggur; and finally visited Ras-ul-Khymah, which appeared to me the most eligible place along this whole line of coast for the site of a town; and from the earliest times it appears

to have been the resort and stronghold of all the corsairs who lurked about the Persian Gulf.

When the expedition of 1809 was fitted out from Bombay to destroy Ras-ul-Khymah, the Sooltaun of Muskat was expected to co-operate with it, but this he declined, alleging the impossibility of any large vessel approaching sufficiently near to bombard the town, owing to the shallowness of the coast, and it being a most dangerous lee-shore in a north-west wind, which blows for two-thirds of the year, and towards the winter, heavy gales from the south-east come on without any further warning than a thick fog, which precedes the wind only a few minutes.

That his highness the Imaum was perfectly well acquainted with this dangerous coast, cannot for a moment be questioned, since his ships were always navigating this gulf; and in confirmation of this opinion, I remember hearing the commander of one of

the East India Company's surveying ships, relate the narrow escape he experienced from shipwreck during his survey of this particular line of coast. He had anchored within a very short distance of the shore, in order to obtain observations of Jupiter's satellites—the wind and swell set in towards midnight, which caused the ship to drive so much, that it was as dangerous to make sail as to ride out the gale at anchor. Wishing to try the latter course, they sent down the top-sail yards, in the hope of being able to hold on for the rest of the night, but in a few hours they parted three cables, and on setting sail, the ship cast the wrong way, and lost considerably in wearing. The jib and spanker were blown from their bolt-ropes, and the vessel, under her courses and fore-topmast stay-sail, bowed before her canvass like a reed bending to a gale, and plunged through the foaming surf, which seemed like clouds driving in the heavens. If, after the quarter-master had called "by the mark five," the water had shoaled as the

ship careened with the wave, she must have struck: indeed, the commander hesitated whether he should not beach her at once, but she gradually edged off the shore, and eventually cleared the coast without having an anchor or cable left on board.

In addition to such dangers as the above, the sooltaun declared that the strength of the place, and the determined character of the garrison for obstinacy and bravery, precluded all chance of success, without the presence of an army of at least ten thousand men. Nevertheless, on the 13th of November, 1809, the British stormed the town—spiked all the guns—burned every boat in the harbour—levelled the fortifications—and lost *one* man.

In the course of a very short time, however, the fortifications were rebuilt, and Ras-ul-Khymah resumed its strong condition together with its formidable name. Repeated piracies were committed on the vessels trading between India and Persia, and these acts increased to such an extent, that it was

almost impracticable for any ship to proceed in safety past the Quoins*, or Cape Mussendom†, without convoy. Commerce had been materially injured—was, indeed, nearly abandoned.

The following fact will shew the audacity of these pirates. One of the East

* Some high and rugged rocks at the entrance of the gulf, so called from their supposed resemblance to a gunner's quoin. There is an open passage between them and the Arabian shore for vessels of five or six hundred tons burden.

† Cape Mussendom, or Musseldom, the Maketa of Nearchus, juts out a considerable distance. The extreme point of the cape is a massy abutment of barren rock rising from the sea, and severed from the main land apparently by some convulsion of nature. Sir Ephraim Stannus, when political resident in the Gulf of Persia, passed between it and the shore in the Honourable Company's sloop of war "Clive," then commanded by as good a sailor as ever trod a deck—the late Captain Betham. No vessel had ever sailed through this channel before, nor has any one attempted the passage since. The strait is a most hazardous one, and can only be accomplished with a fair wind, as it is not above four hundred yards wide, and no bottom can anywhere be found. Off this cape (within less than half a mile of it) a British man of war anchored in a hundred fathoms

India Company's cruisers, stationed in the Persian Gulf for the protection of trading vessels, fell in with a country trader, the captain of which begged that his vessel might be convoyed by the cruiser towards Bushire. The solicitation was readily granted. The stranger contrived somehow or other to run close alongside the cruiser, and threw so many armed men on board of her deck, that she was soon carried. The bucaniers murdered many of the crew, and mutilated those whose lives they chose to spare. Shortly after this, a vessel hove in sight, which proved to be another British

water in a calm, to prevent being driven on the rocks. Moore thus alludes to this cape in his poem of the Fire Worshippers:—

“ Fresh smell the shores of Araby,
While breezes from the Indian sea
Blow round Selama's sainted cape,
And curl the shining flood beneath,—”

The Orientals call this headland “Salamah.” Morier says, “The Indians when they pass the promontory, throw cocoa nuts, fruits, or flowers into the sea to secure a propitious voyage.”

cruiser, whereupon the pirates abandoned both vessels, and, taking to their small boats, escaped.

The private merchant-ship "Minerva" was also taken, and, with the exception of three individuals, the officers and crew were brutally massacred. Of the three persons spared, one was an Armenian lady, the wife of the political resident in Turkish Arabia, who was held in the most afflicting captivity at or near Ras-ul-Khymah for many months, but a rich ransom was at length paid for her liberty.

It is not at all surprising that such audacious acts were perpetrated by the Joassimees, when the following indisputable fact, the result of consummate ignorance and imbecility, is made known. The Honourable East India Company's cruiser "Fury," commanded by the brave Lieutenant Gowan, was bearing despatches of importance from Bassorah to Bombay, which had been brought by Tartars from Constantinople into Turkish Arabia. In running down the

gulf, Gowan was attacked by a Joassimee fleet of boats, which he fired at right and left, until they sheered off, having sustained a heavy loss. On Lieutenant Gowan's arrival at the presidency, he called upon the governor with his despatches, and, of course, officially reported the affair; but, what was his astonishment to find, that instead of being complimented in squadron or general orders for his spirited resistance, and for preserving the despatches, he received a most severe reprimand, for daring to molest the innocent and unoffending Arabs of the Persian Gulf!

The Bombay government, however, subsequently grew wiser, and were determined to destroy these corsairs, and their fortresses: to carry this into effect, a force of about five thousand men, consisting of the forty-seventh and sixty-fifth regiments of the line, one Bombay native infantry corps, and the flank companies of others, with some artillery and engineers, were placed under the command of Lieutenant-general Sir Wil-

liam Grant Keir, of his late Majesty's service, and sailed from Bombay harbour towards the close of the year 1819. The naval part of this expedition consisted of his Majesty's ship "Liverpool," of fifty guns, "Eden," of twenty-six guns, "Curlew," of eighteen guns, and several of the East India Company's vessels of war and transports, with gun and mortar boats. Commodore Collier, R. N. commanded the squadron.

On the 2nd of December, the expedition reached Ras-ul-Khymah, and before daylight of the 4th, the first detachment of the troops landed a little to the southward of the town. Several gun-boats, and a pinnace with a twelve-pound carronade, covered the disembarkation. The tents were pitched on the shore, and the rest of the force was disembarked during the day. Whilst the men were thus employed, a body of Arabs advanced, and some slight skirmishing ensued between the antagonists. Shortly afterwards, two chieftains, well mounted, rode leisurely down the lines, within a very short

distance of the encampment, and reconnoitred our proceedings with the greatest *sang-froid* imaginable. They were fired at from the boats, when they dashed through the very centre of the camp. Although at least fifty muskets were discharged at them, they kept their course untouched. "Well done, my hearties!" shouted the men, who were quite delighted at their daring. The extremity of the camp was soon passed, and in a few more seconds, both suddenly checked their steeds, wheeled round with an air of utter defiance, stood gazing back upon us for a few minutes, and then trotted coolly away.

Ras-ul-Khymah is of considerable extent; and from the sea appears a place of great natural strength. The fort was always kept in good repair, with high walls, composed of mud and stone, and flanked by heavy ramparts. It stood upon a sandy peninsula, the isthmus of which was defended by a well-flanked battery, whilst the line towards "Oman's dark blue sea," was fortified, for the space of a mile, by batteries, each mounting

a single gun ranged at regular intervals. The houses were flat-roofed, and of stone, and, although exhibiting a mean appearance, their arrangement suggested the mode of life pursued by their inhabitants, and the necessity of being prepared for any surprise. A suburb of bamboo huts adjoined the town, immediately behind which lay a capacious basin, perfectly sheltered, and completely land-locked by a bar of sand which stretched across its mouth. Large vessels must discharge their cargo previously to crossing this bar. The batteries of the town bore distinctly on the entrance of the port; the harbour was full of shipping; the main land on the opposite coast appeared highly picturesque, and the mountains of Arabia reared their rugged and hazy outlines to the sky, forming a magnificent background to the whole scene.

On the morning of the 4th, two thousand of Syyud Saiad's troops joined the British force from Muskat over land. The "Curlew" weighed, and, standing towards the

beach, opened her fire upon the town. Some skirmishing also took place on the shore. The light company of the sixty-fifth regiment advanced and reconnoitred. The first line of trenches was made by means of sand-bags, and an advanced battery opened on the place, at the distance of three hundred yards. The Joassimee battery, which enfiladed the trenches, did considerable execution. Poor Major Molesworth, of the forty-seventh regiment, mounted the parapet of the trench to reconnoitre more minutely, and to ascertain how the formidable batteries could be best silenced. "They are loading now," he called out—"now they are running out their guns—look out for yourselves, my lads!" The next moment laid him in the trench—his head was blown to atoms! At length, a gun which had done murderous havoc amongst the men was completely silenced.

The following day, the "Liverpool" and "Eden" opened a tremendous fire right on the town. Shells were thrown with im-

mense effect. A Joassimee spy was brought into camp; and declared that the Arabs had lost upwards of a hundred men. When our guns were discharged, the Arabs leaped out of the embrasures, and, picking up the round shot, immediately returned it, though the salutation was wide of the mark.

During the night of the 4th, the sentry of one of the pickets observed a dark object like a bear creeping on all fours, followed by several similar figures. He was cut down in a twinkling, together with all his comrades. All was confusion. The trenches were filled with Joassimees engaged with our men, who were most cruelly speared and sabred. They actually captured a howitzer, which was, however, almost immediately retaken by a party of the sixty-fifth, under the command of Lieutenant-colonel Warren. A desperate action ensued: the Arabs fought with the utmost bravery, but were soon bayoneted. Heaps upon heaps were found in the trenches, in a state of nudity, and anointed with grease.

On the 7th, flags of truce were dispatched from the town, to which no attention was paid. The cannonading continued; and, on orders being issued to prepare for the storm, Colonel Ehrlington and the forty-seventh, with the flank companies of the Bombay native infantry corps, immediately marched forward. On a given signal, they rushed from the trenches and advanced to the breach, which was soon mounted, and the town entered. The enemy fled from the walls, and were seen scampering off towards the distant hills.

Two youths, together with four unfortunate old women, were the only living animals found within the town, whom the Arabs did not consider worth taking away with them. The blood-red flag gave place to the union—the fort was dismantled, and the walls razed. Our loss in killed was one major, and four rank and file. A lieutenant of the royal navy, a captain, subaltern, two serjeants, a drummer, and forty-six rank and file, were wounded. The

enemy lost at least one thousand men—the number of the wounded was never accurately ascertained.

The two young prisoners turned out to be natives of the Coromandel coast, and the sole survivors of the crew of the schooner “Mary,” of Madras, recently taken by the Joassimee pirates. They related that on the capture of their vessel, the captain and crew were put to death. The Joassimees made Mahommetans of them, and took them into the interior. When the expedition hove off the coast, they were told to return to Ras-ul-Khymah, which they did, and on their way, were plundered of their clothes by the Muskat troops, and assured that the English would provide them with others. They said, there were upwards of two thousand men under arms, when our troops landed; and that, on our taking the place, the sheikh retreated to the desert, carrying his son along with him. The sheikh’s brother, Mahommed Salim, was killed, together with two hundred men, and about twenty women, by the

shot from the "Liverpool," "Aurora," and "Nautilus" alone, and hundreds died daily from their wounds. The Joassimees had an encampment about three miles from the shore, and about one month's provision with them. They alternately kept watch, and had good telescopes. Many of the runaways wanted to throw themselves on our mercy, but the Shiekh Hassan-bin-Ali dissuaded them, and told them that if the British laid hands on them they would impale them all. These youths also said, that during the siege, the women remained under stockades, which were erected for the purpose, as they were driven from their houses by the shot from the frigate and cruisers. Several shells burst, doing great execution; the pirates picked up all the pieces and threw them into the sea. They procured their powder and supplies from Muskat and Linga, the people of the latter place visiting the former for the express purpose of purchasing rice, which they resold for five dollars the bag. With these

pirates plunder is made a general stock, and distributed by the chief in equal portions ; water is scarce, and sold at the rate of a penny for a measure containing about two gallons.

The minor forts, such as Luft, Raumps, Zeilah*, &c., were also destroyed, and a military detachment from the expedition stationed on the southern extremity of the island of Kishm, which, however, was soon obliged to remove to Bassadore, on its western side, in consequence of the insalubrity of the first position.

Bassadore is now the naval station in this quarter, and the residence appointed by the Bombay government of the commodore commanding the gulf squadron, who hoists his flag on board the guard-ship. This island belongs to Syyud Saiad, the Sooltaun of Muskat, and

* Lieutenant Matheson, of the sixty-fifth regiment, was here killed. The siege lasted for five days, and, had it not been for the "Liverpool's" twenty-four-pounders, the place would probably have remained in the possession of the Joassimees.

is about sixty miles in extent. It represents the ancient Oarakhta, where king Erythras is said by Arrian to have been entombed. Several officers in the Indian navy have endeavoured to trace the remains of his sepulchre, as yet unsuccessfully. To the honour of these officers it must be conceded, that they have done every thing in their power to improve this station of *coup de soleil* and drought, and to ameliorate the wretched condition of its poor inhabitants. Wholly unassisted by the government, they have erected a racket-court for the amusement of the seamen, and thus given employment to hundreds of Persians from the opposite shore. The danger and misery attendant on a three years' cruise in this gulf, it is utterly impossible to imagine or to describe. I could cite very many instances where, "sad and worn," the most intelligent officers have, in consequence of unavoidable exposure to the "hell that's there," been seized with the gulf fever, which invariably seared their very brains,

caused madness, and proved fatal to them after a few hours. If the allowances of the officers belonging to the Indian navy were granted on a fair estimation of the arduous duties imposed upon them, they would be on a far more liberal scale than they are at present. It is, indeed, sincerely to be hoped that, amongst the many generous measures which the Directors of the Honourable East India Company are carrying into effect, a greater equality in the amount of all allowances will be conceded to the services in India—civil, naval, and military,—than at present prevails; or, at all events, that we shall be paid more in accordance with the nature of the service, and the degree of responsibility exacted of us.

CHAPTER IX.

Coast of Oman—Arabian Tribes—Imaum of Muskat—The Ulyezdy Tribe—Sterile Province—Election of a Shiekh—Religious Observances—Slaves in Arabia—Arabs of Oman—Women of Oman—Fish—Harbour of Muskat—Muskat Fruit—Honourable Company's Sloop of War.

CONTINUING our cruise, we passed close along the coast of Oman, the "land of security," which, according to the best Arabian authorities, comprehends the south-easterly region of Arabia, extending from Cape Ras-al-Hud, on the south, to Zebarah, on the north-eastern coast. This province is divided into two principalities—Rostak and Seer. Muskat is the chief sea-port of the former, and Ras-ul-Khymah, of the latter. It is partitioned also between two Arabian tribes—the Beni-Yemen, and the Beni-Nasir. The sooltaun, or imaum, of Muskat,

is the head of the first, and holds the line of coast from Ras-al-Hud to Mussendom; and the chieftain of the Cassimees or Joassimees, that of the other—his territory extending from Mussendom to Sharga, which constitutes the Seer principality.

The Beni-Yemen consists of six distinct families, of whom the following are the leaders: Syyud Saiad, the sooltaun of Muskat; Azzan of Sohar; Nunneed of Rostak; Nunneed of Simoak; Nunneed of Zaheed; and the Beni Ghafrey tribe, under the chief Mahommed bin Nasir. The most powerful family is the first; and its present representative is, perhaps, the only chieftain in this quarter of the globe who possesses any pretensions to the title of a polished and accomplished gentleman. Unlike other Arabian princes, he seeks to increase his power by the liberal encouragement of commerce among his subjects, rather than by grinding them down, according to the universal usage of the country, with vexatious

and oppressive exactions; and the result, as might be expected, is, that he is the wealthiest and most popular prince throughout Arabia.

Although the disposition of his highness is mild and amiable, he is not wanting in firmness, should circumstances imperatively demand it. When only a beardless boy, a rebellion was raised against him, headed by one of his own relatives. Perceiving that something of a decisive nature was absolutely necessary, he invited this relative to an audience, and when the latter had taken leave, and was in the act of mounting his horse, the imaum plunged his dagger deep into the back of the aggressor, in the very presence of his partisans, which speedily restored tranquillity.

Whenever he has undertaken expeditions against his enemies, he has evinced the greatest courage, leading on his troops, and exhorting them to deeds of valour both by precept and example. When the ship of war,

on which he had embarked to enforce the usual tribute from a tribe that had revolted, was boarded by a numerous and powerful enemy, he retired towards the cuddy with a few Lascars, and, turning two eighteen-pounders forward, soon cleared the vessel of the intruders, and this, too, when every one had given her up as lost. His first-rates are exceedingly fine vessels: the "Liverpool," "Caroline," and "Shah-Alum," in particular, which were built in India; whilst those which have been constructed at Muttra, within a few miles of Muskat, although less perfectly finished than they would have been in the dock-yard of Bombay, are very good specimens of the talents of the Arabian ship-builders.

Syyud Saiad possesses the "suaviter in modo" in a superlative degree, and is a rigid observer of the forms of the Mahommedan religion: all his adherents speak of him with the affection of children to a parent. He dispenses justice in person;

and takes especial care that the laws shall be impartially administered. When any deserving subject is in distressed circumstances, the sooltaun will lend him a sum of money without exacting any interest whatever. In short, he presents, in every way, such a contrast to all Asiatic rulers, that he is decidedly the greatest "lion" in the east.

Oman was originally peopled from Persia, and subject to that despotic government. The first Arabian tribe that settled there, was the Ul-Yezdy, who emigrated from Nejdjud, and who, on entering Oman, solicited from the Persian governor of the province a grant of land on which he might colonise, but being refused, a furious contest ensued, in which the governor was slain, and the Persians expelled.

The Ul-Yezdy subjugated Oman, and being joined by other tribes from Nejdjud, peopled it, and embraced Islamism in the time of Mahommed. Ali, his son-in-law, also

invaded Oman, and having established an intercourse with the Arab tribes, returned. This visitation laid the foundation of a new sect, and in course of time a new religion, for they embraced that schism which is known under the name of "kherej," or seceders.

The hostility existing between the Muskat Arabs and the Joassimees, is the remnant of that very schism, which is undying, and which often generates even in the most peaceful times the worst of passions, and gives rise in periods of trouble to the worst of crimes.

The face of the whole of this province is mountainous, rugged, and sterile. The wildest parts of Europe are as nothing in comparison. Here are vast precipices, for whose summits the eye seeks in vain through the mists and clouds which overhang them; and rocks piled above each other as if by some powerful giant in his revelry. One might almost suppose the evil genii were confined within them by the resistless signet

of the kaliph Soolimaun: for it requires no great stretch of the imagination to conceive that the rugged grandeur of these stupendous rocks was owing to their convulsive struggles for freedom, and the absence of all vegetation, to the blighting effects of their pestiferous presence.

The interior of the country, however, has many fertile valleys occupied by different tribes, each of which possesses its own castles to retire to in time of war; the chieftain then musters his followers, defends himself to the last, and perpetrates every kind of depredation on his enemies. Hence arise those civil feuds which are of such frequent occurrence throughout Oman.

Each tribe elects its own sheikh, and he chooses from the most powerful clan, a leader to rule the whole, who adopts the name of his own tribe as a nation. The succession to the sheikhship continues hereditary so long only as it may be backed by force; but should the successor ever give his followers any cause to doubt his courage, he would instantly be

deserted by the whole tribe, and a new family chosen.

This coast was also formerly in possession of the Portuguese, who were expelled by the Arabs, and these were again partially subdued by the Persians, in the reign of the great Nadir Shah. The Persians were subsequently driven out by Ahmed-bin-Syyud, governor of Sohar, on which occasion he was elected imaum of Oman.

The tribes, although strict in the outward observances of their religion, never omitting their ablutions and prayers, are not bigoted nor intolerant; and although they cannot have any great regard for strangers professing a different religion to themselves, they hospitably share with them their food, and permit of their using their culinary and other domestic utensils.

Although Syyud Saiad, the present sultaun, has done all in his power to suppress slavery, a great traffic is still carried on between the eastern coast of Africa and Oman, and every family retains two or more slaves of both

sexes. The consideration with which the slaves in this and other parts of Arabia are treated, is quite proverbial, and speaks much in favour of the character of the Arabians, who are the kindest and most considerate of masters. Indeed, slaves are very often advanced to posts of great trust and responsibility; and some of the most valuable ships trading between this coast and India are commanded by slaves, who have always rendered a better account to their masters, as regards their mercantile speculations, cargoes, freightage, &c., than many English commanders that I could name, who have been employed by Arab ship-owners. My residence in Arabia has convinced me that a slave may be perfectly happy; and I feel persuaded, that his condition, when compared with most of the peasantry of Europe, is in every respect the more fortunate of the two.

The natives, although a slender-looking race, have a development of sinew and muscle that cannot be surpassed. Corpulence is unknown amongst them, and old age is much

emaciated. They dress very plainly; the male costume consists of a long white or blue shift, buttoned at the throat, leathern sandals, the keffiah, or headkerchief, and a pair of shulwars. Very little attention is paid to the cultivation of the beard or moustaches, which are invariably short and scanty, and the head is kept closely shorn. The wardrobe of the women consists of the chemise, the kerchief for the head, and a dark mask over the nose*. In contradistinction to the men, they cherish the growth of their coal-black

* "The Arabian women wear black masks with little clasps, prettily ordered." (Carreri). Niebuhr mentions their shewing but one eye in conversation. They also blacken the inside of their eye-lids with the "Kahel," which D'Herbelot thus describes:—"Les Turcs appellent ainsi une poudre faite d'antimoine crud, de laquelle ils se servent pour noircir les sourcils, et même pour en faire un collyre contre le mal aux yeux. Les Arabes l'appellent, Al Cohl, d'où nos chymistes ont fait leur Al Cohl, pour exprimer un élyxir réduit à une poudre extrêmement fine. Le meilleur surmeh de tout l'Orient se fait dans la ville de Hamadan, en Perse. C'est pourquoy l'on donne ordinairement au surmeh le titre de surmeh Hamadani." (D'Herbelot, p. 832).

hair, and fasten it up behind the head. When at Zore, near Cape Ras-al-Hud, with the expedition of 1821, under Sir Lionel Smith, I saw women with their hair at least two feet in length, and with a profusion of ornaments on the ears, nose, and round the neck. Some of them wore gold bangles; but they were much lighter, and far less valuable than those worn by the females of Hindoostaun. They were much addicted to coquetry. The girls in Oman marry at the age of twelve, and look old women by the time they are out of their "teens." Intrigues are not uncommon; and throughout the whole of Oman professed courtesans are to be met with.

The birds found along this coast are of too fishy a flavour to be good eating: the stork, curlew, sand lark, and plover, are among the most common. Fish is also more numerous along the shores than I have elsewhere observed. The grampus and the sword-fish have caused the loss of many small vessels, the latter by splitting up their planks,

and fishermen have actually been cut in twain by these fearful monsters of the deep. Among the great variety of fish, the red rock, seer, and dog-fish, are the commonest; and sea-serpents and sharks are caught with a hook and line, but the mullet and other smaller fish, with the net. The quantity of sardinias taken in one day, has frequently been known to fill half a dozen large boats. The cove of Muskat has long been famed for this delicate little fish, whence it is exported to Mekraun, Sinde, and Western India.

The town is most romantically situated in the south-eastern quarter of this cove, or semi-circular bay, surrounded by steep and barren hills, at a distance of about ninety miles from Cape Ras-al-Hud, in a north-westerly direction. The estimated population is ten thousand. About nine-tenths of this number are Mahommedans; the remainder being Hindoos from Bombay and Guzeraut, who are established here as merchants, and treated with great tolerance. The harbour opens to the

“wide unbounded sea” on the north, and is shaped like a horse-shoe. On the south and west, it is bounded by very lofty projecting shores, and on the east, by a ridge of rocks rising to the height of three hundred feet above the level of the sea. The palace and harem of the imaum—

“Where languid beauty kept her pale-faced court,”

stands on the sandy beach, at the south end of the cove, and at about a mile from its mouth.

The depth of water in the harbour is thirty feet; and although the anchorage is not extensive, and exposed to frequent strong northwesterners, the holding ground is so good, that ships may ride at single anchor in perfect safety. Strong forts overlook and protect the cove, and vessels are prohibited from entering after nightfall, or weighing before sunrise. I once spent the entire month of August here, in company with my friend, Captain John Parsons, of the royal navy, now in command of H. M. packet “Sea-

gull ;” and I can safely assert that it is the hottest inhabited place in the whole world—the thermometer fluctuated between 95° and 120° during the day, and at night the dew was as subtle and venomous as the cobra’s sting.

The Muskat fruit was, however, delicious, especially the dates, which are exported to India in great quantities. A single tree, even, is valued at ten dollars, and its annual produce varies from a dollar to a dollar and a half. Estates are here estimated according to the number of date-trees they may possess. Niebuhr thinks that Muskat occupies the site of the Mosca of Arrian and other Greek writers*. Vincent, however, though he speaks doubtfully on the subject, is inclined to place Mosca to the westward of Cape Ras-al-Hud.

We sighted the high land off Zore ; and, after a rapid and pleasant passage across

* Voyage en Arabie, Vol. ii. p. 71, ed. Amst. 1780.

the Indian Ocean, anchored, towards the close of the year, in the magnificent harbour of Bombay, where

“——the slim canoe
Of feather'd Indian, darts about as through
The delicatest air.”

Our cruise in the “Amherst” proved a source of much gratification to us, for there is always something about a man-of-war singularly spirit-stirring. Every thing was in the highest possible order, and the crew were daily exercised at the great guns and small arms. The cheerful obedience and extreme agility of the Lascars, and the consequent absence of all strong measures of coercion, were particularly striking. We really felt very sorry when our cruise ended, and shall ever entertain the liveliest sense of gratitude for the kindness and attention that we received from Captain Wyndham, Lieutenant Poole*, and the rest of the officers

* Since I left Persia, both these officers have fallen victims to fever, while cruising off the Arabian shore

on board the Honourable East India Company's sloop of war "Amherst."

of the Persian Gulf. In life, they were deservedly beloved by all their brother officers, and in death are most sincerely lamented.

CHAPTER X.

Expedition to Arabia—The Camp Attacked—Pursuit—Rescue—
Ferocious Onset—Death of Captain Parr—His Funeral—Sir
George Cox—Our dead Comrades—Barbarous Outrage—Ar-
rival of the Imaum—Captain Thompson's Detachment—Attack
on Beni-boo-Ali—Sortie of the Enemy—Their Determined
Daring—Fall of Beni-boo-Ali—Killed and Wounded—Return
to Zore.

As Zore is a place well known for being the rendezvous of the vessels which conveyed the third expedition from Bombay to the coast of Arabia, and as I was present with that expedition, I may be excused for introducing in this part of my work a brief outline of our operations on that occasion. The force, to the number of two thousand seven hundred men, under the command of General Sir Lionel Smith, (an officer who by his gallantry and services, had already established a high professional character), were embarked on board sixteen transports,

and eleven bughalabs, (these last containing the horses of the mounted branch of the force), and left Bombay harbour on the morning of the 11th of January, 1821, under convoy of the East India Company's brig of war "Vestal," commanded by Lieutenant Robinson, of the Indian navy. After a tedious passage of seventeen days across the Indian Ocean, the ships, swarming with red-coats, came to an anchor near Cape Ras-al-Hud; and, on the morning of the 29th, after considerable difficulty and danger, the boats made way through the surf, and landed the troops with their knapsacks, haversacks, great coats, and well-filled pouches on their backs. The force took up a position near the hamlet of Zore, about four miles distant from the place of disembarkation.

We continued to occupy this position for the space of thirteen days without hearing any thing of our enemies, when, towards midnight of the 11th of February, the camp was

suddenly attacked by six hundred Arabs of the Beni-boo-Ali tribe. This daring band approached our position through an irregular and winding valley, thickly planted with date trees, and situated directly beneath the left flank picquet, which was surprised, and compelled to retire upon the camp, being closely pressed by the shouting and ferocious enemy, who were intoxicated with their success.

The Bombay European regiment* to

* The ceremony of presenting new colours to this old (the "primus in Indis") and distinguished regiment, recently took place in presence of the whole of the Poonah brigade. The governor of Bombay, his excellency the commander-in-chief, and all the general and division staff, honoured the corps with their presence.

The regiment, full seven hundred strong, and in the highest state of discipline and equipment, was formed into close columns of wings facing inwards, and the space between the two centre companies became the arena for the ceremony. The commanding officer, Lieutenant-colonel Wood, placed the colours on a large drum, and, with the two ensigns upon whom the honour of bearing the colours devolved, awaited the approach

which I have the honour to belong, and in which corps I then also served, was encamped on the extreme left of the line, and the enemy succeeded in getting into the rear

of the Earl of Clare, which was announced by a salute of nineteen guns from the horse artillery, and by a general salute from the whole brigade. After the military chaplain had delivered a short prayer appropriate to the occasion, the governor received the colours from Lieutenant-colonel Wood, and addressed the regiment in the following terms:—

“ It has fallen to my lot (I can assure you all, a more agreeable duty could not have been imposed on me), this day to present you your new colours; and I must crave your indulgence for a short time, in order that I may make a few remarks on your old colours, now about to be furled, and on the new colours which I shall present to the regiment.

“ I believe I am quite correct in stating, that I address the oldest regiment in the service of the East India Company. Its origin may be dated from certain independant companies sent out to this country by king Charles the Second, about the middle of the seventeenth century, to garrison the fort and island of Bombay, then ceded to us by the king of Portugal. At what period these companies were embodied into one corps, does not exactly appear; but the honours you have gained since that time, at the glorious siege of Seringapatam,

of the men's lines, and appeared amongst our marquees before the regiment had time to fall in. There was consequently some little confusion. Several marine officers belonging

on the victorious field of Kirkee, and against the Arabs in the Persian Gulf, at Beni-boo-Ali, are too remarkable for me to pass by in silence.

“Who has not heard of Serjeant Graham, of the Bombay European regiment, that first planted the British Union on the ramparts of Seringapatam? What soldier is there whose heart does not beat high when he reflects on the renown which that brave man shed on his corps, who met his fate in the moment of victory, and almost with his last breath shouted, ‘Hurrah! Lieutenant Graham!’ I am no soldier; but, as an Englishman, I should be really ashamed to confess that I did not feel exultation when I call to mind his gallant conduct. To you all I say it, and I say it with perfect truth, there are, at this moment, many Serjeant Grahams in the Bombay European regiment.

“In alluding to the capture of Seringapatam, for which the hero of that glorious day, the late lamented Sir David Baird, and the gallant force serving under him, received the well-deserved thanks of a British Parliament and of the Court of Directors, I feel confident it cannot fail also to be a source of gratification to the regiment, that it there served in company of the Duke of Wellington, with that unrivalled Captain, in whose praise no tongue is silent—who has wreathed

to the transports, who had been spending a few days on shore with their military friends, were seen scampering from their tents towards our regimental lines in a state

about the sword of England laurels as unfading as those which encircled her trident. Though to Europe we must look as the later theatre of his exertions, the more memorable witness of his fame, still it must always be remembered, that, in this country, your regiment witnessed the commencement of his glorious career, which, after a series of triumphs unparalleled in the annals of the world, was at last closed on the field of Waterloo, until a new war shall again call him forth to lead the British armies to conquest.

“From these subjects of exultation to the regiment at the close of the last century, I turn to your glorious achievements at the battle of Kirkee. The circumstances of that memorable day are too fresh in the recollection of every one to make it necessary for me particularly to allude to them. On that hill stood the faithless ally, the perfidious prince, who, confident in his vain gods and in the number of his undisciplined troops, there witnessed the downfall of his empire and the triumph of the British army. Well and bravely did the Bombay European regiment on that day earn for itself the additional honour it has since borne; for at no former period were the devoted gallantry of the British army and the incorruptible fidelity of our brave sepoys more conspicuous. I pass onward from the general pacification

of nudity, and amongst them I saw a young cadet, who had been recently posted to the corps, running for his life *en chemise*, closely pursued by an athletic Arab, pushing him on

of this country in 1818, to the year 1821, when the Bombay European regiment was again employed in active service, under the orders of Sir Lionel Smith, against the Arabs in the Persian Gulf, when you entered their capital in triumph, and by your prowess added to your former honours. In whatever quarter you have been engaged, I find the gallantry and good conduct of the Bombay regiment equally remarkable. Wherever you have been present, I find you have invariably increased your reputation. Bear witness, Seringapatam! bear witness, the field of Kirkee! bear witness, Beni-boo-Ali! on your colours; and let me assure you, that I feel confident, in the event of another war, you will add to all these honours.

“I now present to you your colours. Into braver and safer hands than the hands of the officers of the Bombay European regiment, I cannot commit British colours. To you I say it, and I would that every one now present could hear me: under these colours, in the righteous cause of your country, the Bombay European regiment will ever fight its way to victory.”

His lordship having presented the colours to the ensigns, the regiment broke into column, and the whole brigade having marched passed his lordship in

at the *pas de charge* with a sharp-pointed spear, when, luckily for the cadet, both were met by one of our grenadier company's privates, who had come "to the rescue." At this critical moment, he called out to the young officer, "Fall flat on your face, Sir!" and, pulling the trigger of his fire-lock, sent a ball clean through the breast of the courageous stranger, who fell dead at the cadet's feet. He was a tall, gaunt, and sinewy figure, of about thirty; and, though almost fleshless, his square shoulders and review order, concluded this exciting and interesting ceremony.

In the evening a ball was given by the officers of the regiment to the Earl of Clare, Sir Colin and Lady Halkett, and all the fashionables of Poonah. The dancing was kept up with spirit until past midnight, when the company passed from the ball-room to a magnificent suite of tents, where they partook of a splendid supper, at which there was every European as well as Eastern delicacy to gratify the palate. After supper, the dance was resumed, and continued until an early hour in the morning, when the company retired, with a deep sense of the hospitality, kindness, and attention they had received from Lieutenant-colonel Wood and all the officers of the Bombay European regiment.

well-knit joints shewed him to be a most powerful man. Several of our finest fellows were cut down on the moment of their appearing at the opening of their tents, where the Arabs had been awaiting their egress sword in hand.

The marquee which I occupied with my comrades, H. and Le B., had been pitched on the extreme left of the subalterns' lines, and was the most exposed of any throughout the whole camp, as the enemy approached "broad on our weather beam." I was suddenly aroused from my slumbers, by the sound of a ferocious and demoniac shouting, which speedily became more and more distinct :

"——— I seem'd to hear

Sounds gathering upwards, accents incomplete,
And stifled shrieks; and now, more near and near,
A tumult and a rush of thronging feet."

No lamp was burning in the tent, but the moon shed a soft and partial reflection of light around it, which enabled me to discover that my companions had quitted their quarters *breechesless*—they had forgotten

to carry away with them their unmentionables. Starting from the ground, I rushed to the door, and observed about a hundred "children of the Desert" capering towards my tent, brandishing their long straight swords and spears with which they were armed. I seized my pistols from beneath a pormanteau which had formed my pillow, and, cocking them, proceeded to dress myself as quickly as I possibly could. Whilst doing this, a strong party of Arabs surrounded and looked in at my *enviable* position, but they did not appear willing to keep me company. Although I pretended to take no notice of these unwelcome visitors, I must confess, I felt my situation at that critical moment by no means comfortable. They then pierced the tent throughout with their sharp-pointed spears, and wounded my servant, who was sleeping "fast as a watchman" close to the canvass wall.

When I had buckled on my sword, the drums beat to quarters, so I left my *safe billet sans touche*, and made the best

of my way to the lines, near which I found our fine old corps, which bears the sobriquet of the "Toughs," and several companies of the seventh regiment native infantry hard at their morning's work, firing away at the enemy right and left, before the troops occupying the other end of the lines had even fallen in. Our thick-flying musketry soon compelled the Arabs to retire beneath the cover of their date grove, closely pursued by our light company, under Lieutenants Taylor and Stewart, who had some very sharp work.

The loss of life on this memorable night, fell heavy upon us. During the first *mêlée* of this nocturnal onset, the brave Captain Parr, commanding our grenadier company, fell, after having received eighteen frightful wounds—his head was nearly severed from the body, and his backbone cut in two. Some of our officers saw him come out of his tent, and, on meeting him, he said, "The regiment must be turned out;" when they replied, "Do not go in that di-

rection, Parr; the Arabs are very numerous there." He then rejoined, "It does not signify; the regiment must be formed." In the prosecution of that endeavour, he encountered seven of the enemy single-handed, and, after having gallantly but vainly contended against them, fell a sacrifice to his zeal for the credit of his regiment. He lingered nearly two hours in great agony, and died most deeply regretted by us all.

His funeral was the most soul-exciting of the very many I have witnessed. The sword he had so bravely wielded, and held even after his death-wound, was laid on his coffin. The band of the European regiment and the muffled drums led the sad procession, while a long array of mourners followed, mixing the rare accompaniments of gaudy display and real grief. As the procession glided along the rocky path, the very sea seemed listening; and, when "earth to earth, dust to dust," had been solemnly uttered, and the volleys which paid the last honour to the dead, and

started the lonely sea-gull, had been fired, the remains of this hero were left to rest beneath the solitary wastes of Oman!

Our commanding officer, the late Colonel Sir George Cox, Bart., who had been appointed to command the second brigade, received four very severe wounds—one a deep cut across his face and lips, a spear wound in the back, a sword wound in the shoulder, and another on the thigh. Sir George had engaged three Arabs at once; and, when unable to defend himself longer from loss of blood, Captain McKellar, of the transport “Lushington,” who had been spending the day on shore, most opportunely appeared, and succeeded in driving off the enemy, notwithstanding he was *hard screwed* at the time. Captains Watkins and Burnett were also wounded, together with three and twenty men, besides nineteen killed.

With the exception of Major Maw, who was in charge of the regiment, and Adjutant Meriton, we all lost our horses—the Arabs had cruelly hamstrung them; mine was

actually severed in half. No compensation whatever was allowed us for this severe loss, sustained under unparalleled hardships, and on the field. The attack was led by sheikh Kadim-bin-Ali, the brother of Mahommed-bin-Ali, chief of the Beni-boo-Ali tribe, who was also present, and who, during the engagement, received a gun-shot wound in the arm.

On the following morning, the soldiers were brought out of the hospital tents, "lying in death," and stretched at length on the sand. Oh, what a sight it was! the wounds were of the severest kind, from the close quarters the contending parties chose for themselves. Sir Lionel Smith rode through the lines, accompanied by his staff, and had the pain of witnessing the interment of our unfortunate comrades.

The horses, maddened with pain, were shrieking aloud amidst the groans of the wounded, until our pistols put an end to their sufferings. We burnt twenty, (the officers of my regiment, including my own,

alone had lost that number); this was the most ready way of getting rid of them, in the absence of carts for their removal, as, under the blaze of an Arabian sun, their carcasses would, in the briefest period, have proved intolerably offensive to the sight and smell. I shall never forget the shuddering sensation of horror I felt at the sight of some of these frightful gashes. It was much worse than if double the number of horses had been perforated with musket balls, or slain without these *coups de grâce à l'Arabe*. Only fifteen of the enemy were killed, and about a dozen of them wounded.

We now took especial care to guard against a repetition of these awful results, in the event of a second attack being made, by strengthening our picquets, and pitching as closely and as compactly to one another as possible; and, when this had been effected, we laid so snug, that the camp occupied scarcely half the ground it had previously done. Had the enemy on his approach only preserved a strict silence, he might have

annihilated the whole of the left brigade. Ever after this, we slept with our arms in readiness, and the sentries of our picquets kept a sharp look-out.

By the 21st of the month, his highness the imaum of Muskat had arrived with cattle for transporting our provisions and ammunition. He was accompanied by about a thousand men, and nearly as many camels. These were few enough, when it is remembered that the stores for the maintenance of the whole force during its absence from the sea coast, until its return, were to be conveyed through a desert, in which we could procure no supplies whatever.

On the 1st of March, we bivouacked at Beni-boo-Hassan, where we left all our heavy stores, and took up a position before Beni-boo-Ali on the following day; the distance marched from Zore being fifty-five miles. On first seeing Beni-boo-Ali *à la distance*, we crossed the ground on which the massacre of Captain Thompson's detachment took place, and which frightful slaugh-

ter led to the sending up our present expedition. It may, however, be as well to state here what brought that officer in contact with these Arabs.

When the Wahabees visited this part of Oman, the Beni-boo-Ali tribe renounced the pure faith of Islam to join these sectarians, and having repaired and fortified their village, they sent marauding parties out in all directions. His highness the imaum of Muskat used every endeavour to put them down; and, being unsuccessful, applied to Captain Thompson, of H. M. 17th regiment of light dragoons, who commanded a small military detachment then stationed on the island of Kishm, and who, considering the above tribe in the light of pirates, and his orders enjoining him to suppress piracy by every means in his power, lost no time in proceeding to Zore, and from thence soon reached the vicinity of Boo-Ali, where he was suddenly attacked, and his detachment annihilated. Thompson and Lieutenant Boswell, of the second regiment of

Bombay native infantry, were the only officers that escaped. Our advance over the skeletons of our brother officers, which lay bleaching beneath our very feet, made an impression on me, of which the sorrowful effect will not be readily obliterated.

We soon gained an eminence which commanded a view of the works of Beni-boo-Ali. The enemy instantly saluted us with cannon-shot which they had *borrowed* from us before, and killed a corporal of our corps. We opened a couple of howitzers for the purpose of returning the compliment, but soon found the distance too great; and were obliged to advance about a mile and a quarter, when we halted; we could not encamp, for we had not a single tent with us; even Sir Lionel Smith had no tent, but was obliged to *rough it*, and to draw the same rations as were served out to the men.

We now occupied a date grove, and threw picquets forward; the rest of the division was assembled behind some low calcareous hills in contiguous columns of companies, at

quarter-distance, which kept the whole under shelter. The pioneers were ordered to make a road through the grove and dig trenches, as the general intended to occupy it during the night. The enemy attempted no molestation, but scudded from bank to bank down to the right of their fort, and we thought they were also moving their guns in the same direction. As they had assembled on our flank, it was necessary to meet the evolution by another as prompt; our corps, therefore, went into the grove to face the enemy or repel a sortie. It now became evident they were all coming out, so the whole force was ordered down: the twelve-pounders playing unremittingly on them whilst the line formed.

The right brigade, consisting of H. M. sixty-fifth regiment and the first battalion of the seventh native infantry, under the gallant Warren, advanced to the grove with two six-pounders, to dislodge the enemy from it, but the severe matchlock-firing obliged the skirmishers to retire. The enemy im-

mediately, to at least a thousand in number, with their "stout hearts and warm batteries," rushed forward, and came up honestly to their work: the sixty-fifth gave them a volley and charged, but the enemy out-flanked them on the left, turned the seventh regiment, and got in rear of that corps, which suffered very severely. Surgeon Gordon was cut to pieces; Major Stewart, who was commanding the regiment, most severely wounded; and Adjutant Thurnham slightly. About nineteen sepoys were killed, and one hundred and twenty-seven wounded. They then took possession of one of our twelve-pounders, and fell upon the rear of the sixty-fifth regiment, which they broke through, wounding three lieutenants very severely: some companies of that distinguished corps formed to the rear, fired, and charged. The slaughter was terrible on both sides; and the enemy who were in the rear were obliged to cut their way through the brigade to regain their date groves.

All who witnessed this extraordinary at-

tack, declared that more determined bravery was never displayed by troops of any nation. Not only were they unchecked in their advance in the very face of repeated discharges of grape, which slew them in multitudes, but, scorning the line of bayonets opposed to them, they made a fair stand-up fight of it—threw themselves upon our corps, seized our firelocks with both hands to break through our ranks, and cut down our men after we had pierced their bodies with the bayonet. All our own men that fell were slain with their long, straight, double-edged swords, the matchlock being scarcely used during the attack ; and though the sepoys were out-flanked, broken, and pushed hard by this impetuous charge, they never evinced the slightest disposition to disperse or to retreat.

The right brigade was now ordered to fall back, to give place to the left, whilst the wounded were carried to the rear. Our regiment moved forward, and filed along under cover of the outer wall of the fort: we

soon silenced the enemy's fire, and took possession of his bastions. This was the last effort made by the tribe for the defence of their families,—a loud wailing was heard from the women, who shouted out "Aman," meaning quarter, or safe conduct. Two women came out, bearing a white flag, and declared the fort was ours. Sir Lionel said he would grant them five minutes, to decide whether they would surrender unarmed. To these terms there was some hesitation, and many of the enemy were seen scudding away by the back of the inner fort: the guns then opened to breach the wall, and the sixty-fifth regiment moved up at the double march to prevent the escape of the Arabs. The flag of truce was again displayed from the ramparts, and the general immediately ordered a cessation of all acts of hostility. The women were permitted to escape, and, when some officers went into the fort, the men laid down their arms. As the silken flags of the sixty-fifth and our regiment were flying over the walls, our men waved their little white

foraging caps in the air,—and thus fell Beni-boo-Ali!

Two hundred and thirty-five of the enemy were lying dead on the field, and amongst these were several women; but his highness the imaum declared that upwards of five hundred had fallen on this occasion. We lost twenty-six killed, and one hundred and seventy-one wounded. Two hundred and seventy prisoners were taken and had their wounds dressed; but they refused to submit to amputation, all of them preferring death to being disabled. Both the chiefs were most severely wounded; the youngest had two balls in his legs, and appeared to suffer the greatest pain. He subsequently died; but all the prisoners were taken to Bombay, where every attention was paid them, and, after a short confinement, they were permitted to return to their native country.

On the night of the 6th, the women retired to the desert, and Beni-boo-Ali was destroyed, together with all those stores we had no means of taking back with us to Zore.

During this operation the prisoners thought they also were to be included, and some actually inquired, if their time was near at hand. These wretched captives were constantly in a state bordering on madness, which was fostered by their utter hopelessness of eventual liberation: they actually courted death at our hands, beseeching us to stab them with our swords, and thus to free them of their existence.

We left Beni-boo-Ali to return to Zore on the 7th of March, and experienced the greatest difficulty in conveying away our wounded, all of whom were great sufferers. By the 12th, we had encamped near the sea coast, and, the weather being propitious and the wind as fair as if bespoken, we immediately commenced our embarkation for the shores of Western India.

APPENDIX.

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APPENDIX.

Note I. *Page 226.*

THE despatch received in India from the Major-general, commanding the expedition to Ras-ul-Khymah, was to the following effect:—

“ I have the satisfaction to report the town of Ras-ul-Khymah, after a resistance of six days, was taken possession of this morning by the force under my command. Previous to making you acquainted with the circumstances which led to this fortunate result, I shall do myself the honour briefly to detail the events which occurred between the period of my last communication and the commencement of the operations before Ras-ul-Khymah.

“ On the 18th ult., after completing my arrangements at Muscat, the ‘ Liverpool ’ sailed for the rendezvous at Kishm; on the 21st, we fell in with the fleet off the Persian coast, and anchored off the island of Larrack on the 24th of November.

“ As it appeared probable that a considerable period would elapse before the junction of the ships, which were detained at Bombay, I conceived it would prove highly advantageous to avail myself of that interval, in acquiring as accurate a knowledge of the strength and defences of Ras-ul-Khymah as personal observation could supply, and I gladly embraced the proposal of Captain Collier, that the ‘ Liverpool ’ should proceed thither for that purpose. The senior engineer was accordingly taken on board; and, having sailed from Larrack on the morning of the 25th, we anchored off Ras-ul-Khymah on the 27th. The place was closely and repeatedly reconnoitered, and the weather continuing favourable for our operations, I determined to order down the troops, and commence the attack without waiting for the rear transports, as the season of the north-west winds was rapidly approaching, and Captain Collier appeared apprehensive that a further delay might prove detrimental to the enterprise. A vessel was, therefore, despatched with instructions to Captain Walpole, who was left in charge of the fleet, and on the 2nd instant, the transports arrived under convoy of the ‘ Curlew.’

“ No time was lost in making the necessary preparations for landing, which was effected the

following morning without opposition, at a spot which had been previously selected for that purpose, about two miles to the southward of the town. The troops were formed across the isthmus connecting the peninsula, on which the town is situated, with the neighbouring country, and the whole day was occupied in getting tents on shore, to shelter the men from the rain, landing engineers' tools, sand-bags, &c., and making arrangements preparatory to commencing our approaches the next day. On the morning of the 4th, the light troops were ordered in advance, supported by the picquets, to dislodge the enemy from a bank within nine hundred yards of the outer fort, which was expected to afford good cover for the men, and to serve as a depôt for stores, previous to the erection of the batteries. The whole of the light companies of the force, under command of Captain Backhouse, of his Majesty's forty-seventh regiment, accordingly moved forward, and drove the Arabs with great gallantry from a date grove, and over the bank above described, close under the walls of the fort, followed by the picquets under Major Molesworth, who took post at the sand-bank, whilst the European light troops were skirmishing in front. The enemy kept up a sharp fire of musketry and cannon during these movements; and

I regret to add, that Major Molesworth, a gallant and zealous officer, was killed by a cannon shot at the head of the picquets. Lieutenant Stepney, of the sixty-fifth, was wounded on this occasion. The troops, however, maintained their position during the day, and in the night effected a lodgment within three hundred yards of the southernmost tower, and erected a battery for four guns, together with a mortar battery, on the right, and a trench of communication for the protection of the covering party.

“The weather having become rather unfavourable for the disembarkation of the stores required for the siege, it was with considerable difficulty that this primary object was effected; but every obstacle was surmounted by the zeal and indefatigable exertions of the navy, and on the morning of the 6th, we were enabled to open three eighteen-pounders on the fort; a couple of howitzers and six-pounders were also placed in the battery on the right, which played on the defences of the towers, and nearly silenced the enemy's fire. The ‘Liverpool,’ during these operations, warped in as close to the shore as her draught of water would permit, and opened her guns on the town, which must have created considerable alarm in the garrison, but she was unfortunately at too great a dis-

tance to produce any decided effect. The enemy, who during the whole of our progress exhibited a considerable degree of resolution in withstanding, and ingenuity in counteracting our attacks, sallied forth at eight o'clock this evening along the whole front of our intrenchments, crept close up to the mortar battery without being perceived, and entered it over the parapet, after spearing the advanced sentries. The party which occupied it was obliged to retire, but being immediately reinforced, charged the assailants, who were driven out of the battery with considerable loss. The attack on the left was repelled instantaneously by the spirited resistance of the covering party under Major Warren, who distinguished himself much on this occasion by his coolness and gallantry. The enemy repeated his attacks towards morning, but was vigorously repulsed. During the 7th, every exertion was made to land and bring up the remaining guns and mortars, which was accomplished during the night, after incessant labour by the sailors, assisted by working parties from the troops, and those of his highness the imaum, who cheerfully volunteered their services. They were immediately placed in battery, together with two twenty-four-pounders, which were landed from the 'Liverpool,' and in the morning the whole of

our ordnance opened on the fort, and fired with scarcely any intermission till sunset, when the breach on the curtain was rendered nearly practicable, and the towers almost untenable. Immediate arrangements were made for the assault, and the troops ordered to move down to the trenches at daybreak the next morning. The bombardment continued during the night, and the batteries, having recommenced their fire before day-light, completed the breaches by eight o'clock. The accompanying orders will explain to his Excellency the dispositions of attack, as well as the measures taken to guard against the possibility of a failure, in the event of the enemy defending himself as desperately as might have been expected from his previous defence. These precautions, however, were unnecessary: the party moved forward about eight o'clock, and entered the fort, through the breaches, without firing a shot; and it soon appeared that the enemy had evacuated the place. The town was taken possession of, and found almost entirely deserted: only eighteen or twenty men, and a few women, remained in their houses. Upon the whole, it appears evident, considering the spirited behaviour of the enemy at the commencement of the siege, that their sudden resolution to evacuate the place

was occasioned by the overwhelming fire of the artillery, of which they could have formed no previous idea, and which the ample means, placed at my disposal, enabled me to bring against the town.

“ Our loss, I am happy to say, is much less than could have been expected, from the length of the siege, and the obstinacy with which the enemy disputed our approaches. I have had no means of ascertaining theirs, but it must have been severe.

“ I beg you will assure his Excellency, that I feel entirely satisfied with the conduct of the troops ; their gallantry has been exceeded only by their patience and cheerfulness under every species of privation and fatigue ; and the peculiarity of this service has called forth a full display of these qualities, which are equally creditable to the soldier as the most intrepid acts of bravery. By the orders which I do myself the honour to inclose, his Excellency will be enabled to estimate the services performed by Captain Collier and the naval part of the expedition ; and I can only add, that the acknowledgments therein expressed are scarcely adequate to the assistance I have received from them.

(Signed) “ W. GRANT KEIR,
“ Major-general.”

“ *Camp, Ras-ul-Khymah, 9th Dec. 1819.*”

Note II. *Page 271.*

“ TO HIS EXCELLENCY LIEUT.-GEN. SIR C. COLVILLE,
G. C. B., COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF, &c. BOMBAY.

“ SIR,—I have great pleasure in reporting to your Excellency, that the division which the government did me the honour to place under my orders for service, against the tribe of Beni-boo-Ali, having arrived before his capital yesterday morning, succeeded in repulsing a very spirited attack of the enemy, and in gaining complete possession of his whole fortified position before sunset in the evening.

“ The principal action fell on the right brigade under Lieutenant-colonel Warren, of his Majesty's sixty-fifth regiment, with about four hundred rank and file of that regiment, and about three hundred of the first battalion of the seventh native infantry, which has, I am very sorry to say, sustained a very heavy loss.

“ The enemy left upwards of two hundred men killed in the field: and reckoning those they carried off, and those who fell in the subsequent at-

tack of the citadel, I cannot calculate his total loss at less than five hundred killed and wounded.

“There are also two hundred and thirty-six prisoners who bore arms, of whom ninety-six are wounded, and the families amount to upwards of one thousand individuals; so, I trust, I can assure your Excellency the tribe is effectually put down. The two principal chiefs of the tribe are also prisoners, both badly wounded; one in the attack on our camp at Zore, on the 10th ult., and the other in the action of yesterday.

“The enemy evinced the most determined gallantry, but he received such a destructive fire, it was impossible he could maintain his attack long: I calculate the number he brought into action at about 1,000 men.

“All the guns which he gained possession of from Captain Thompson’s detachment are recovered, and in good order.

“I beg to inclose your Excellency a list of the killed and wounded, and a plan of the fort and environs of Boo-Ali, shewing the whole operations of the day, which were most laborious.

“I also inclose a copy of the orders issued to the division, whose conduct I cannot sufficiently praise to your Excellency. I have been under great obligations to the heads of departments, and other

officers, who have earned the record of my acknowledgments; and I beg to draw your Excellency's favourable notice to their high deserts.

"The service, though short, has been very arduous. The natural difficulties of the country, which afforded no supplies whatever, and my little means of carriage, imposed the necessity of reduced rations, and very limited camp equipage to all ranks, under the severest exposure of heat and thirst. The troops endured all their difficulties with the most becoming patience and confidence, and I can assure your Excellency they have well supported the reputation of the Bombay army.

"This despatch will be delivered to your Excellency by my aide-de-camp, Lieutenant Place, of his Majesty's sixty-fifth regiment: an old subaltern, who has long been on my staff, and who deserves my warmest recommendation to your Excellency's notice.

"I have the honour, &c.

(Signed)

"LIONEL SMITH,

"Major-general."

"*Camp, Beni-boo-Ali, March 3, 1831.*"

DIVISION ORDERS BY MAJOR-GENERAL SMITH, C. B.

“ Major-general Smith avails himself of the first leisure moment he has had to convey to all the division his acknowledgment of their important services against Beni-boo-Ali.

“ Lieutenant-colonel Leighton, second in command, is requested to accept the Major-general's thanks for the cordial assistance he has afforded him on all occasions, particularly in the personal command of the left brigade.

“ The Major-general also desires to express his thanks and applause to Lieutenant-colonel Warren, of his Majesty's sixty-fifth regiment, for the gallant exertions of his brigade, in repulsing the very spirited attack of the enemy with his whole force yesterday, which was followed by the immediate occupation of the strong defences on his right, and hastened his total submission in the evening.

“ Captain Stewart, commanding the first battalion of the seventh, and Lieutenant and Adjutant Thurnham, of the same battalion, particularly distinguished themselves on this occasion.

“ Throughout this short but very arduous service, from the nature of the country and climate, the

troops have endured more than common privations and difficulties with the most praiseworthy perseverance and cheerful confidence, and the Major-general will be able to give testimony to his Excellency the commander-in-chief, that they have eminently upheld the high character of the Bombay army.

“ The Major-general cannot close these acknowledgments without expressing his best thanks to Major Jackson, of his Majesty’s carbineers, his military secretary, for the benefit of his exertions in the field yesterday, and on all occasions when he could apply his zeal and assistance.

“ His most sincere thanks are also offered to Major Stannus, the assistant-adjutant-general; Captain Wilson, the assistant-quarter-master-general; and Captain Keith, the assistant-commissary-general; and he will not fail to bring to the notice of the commander-in-chief, the indefatigable devotion with which those officers discharged the duties of their departments.

“ The Major-general owes it to Major Mackintosh, and the officers and detachment of artillery, to offer them his thanks for their valuable services. By that officer’s able arrangement, under the most discouraging difficulties of roads and means, the division was provided with two horse brigades of

twelve-pounders, which secured the early success of our operations against the principal fort.

“ The Major-general also derived the greatest benefit from the ability and judgment with which Captain Dickinson suggested the direction of the artillery against the fort, and he begs that officer will receive his best thanks and applause.

“ Lieutenant Robinson, of the Honourable Company’s marines, and the volunteer seamen from the fleet off Zore, rendered the divison great service, and underwent the most trying labour and fatigue in dragging heavy guns. Major-general Smith, requests Lieutenant Robinson will accept and communicate his best thanks, and he will express to government how much he is indebted to that officer for his useful exertions.

(Signed) “ E. G. STANNUS,
“ A. A. G.”

“ *Camp, Beni-boo-Ali, March 3, 1821.*”

THE END.

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